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THE WORKS OF Mr JOHN GLAS.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE

THE WORKS OF Mr JOHN GLAS.

The Teſtimony of the KING OF MARTYRS concerning his Kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. explained and illuſtrated in ſcripture-light.

John i. 46.——*Come and ſee.*

Rev. xvi. 10. *And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the ſeat of the beaſt; and his kingdom was full of darkneſs and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1729.]

The PREFACE.

WHen there is ſo much regard paid to the teſtimony of men, which can never be the ground of our faith, it cannot be queſtioned, but that more regard is due to the teſtimony of the author and finiſher of faith: "For if we "receive the witneſs of men, the witneſs of God is greater." At leaſt it may be expected, that as many as would "fight "the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life," will give a fair hearing to this good confeſſion which Jeſus Chriſt witneſſed before Pontius Pilate. And certainly no true Chriſtian will find reaſon to be aſhamed of this teſtimony of our Lord, even though it will make all them that are not aſhamed to confeſs it in all its parts, partakers of the afflictions of

the goſpel: "For God hath not given them the ſpirit of fear, "but of power, and of love, and of a ſound mind."

The true cauſe of my ſufferings is the open confeſſion of this teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, as I underſtand it: and no man can confeſs any part of divine revelation, but according to the underſtanding he has of it; otherwiſe it is not his own confeſſion, but another man's; or, he confeſſes not truths, but words. For this cauſe I ſuffer in my name, by cruel mockings and reproaches; and in my miniſtry, being rejected, as the "head of the corner" himſelf was, by them that pretend to be "builders:" and for this cauſe I ſuffer the loſs of my living in the world, as far as lies in the power of my perſecutors; and it will be owing to the good providence of God, and the equity of the magiſtrate, if my ſufferings do not proceed yet further. Yet, in all this, the enemies of my cauſe perſuade themſelves and their followers, that "they "are doing God good ſervice:" and I am perſuaded, that I ought not to think this "ſtrange, as though ſome ſtrange "thing had happened to me."

But being thus debarred from that acceſs I once had to preach the goſpel of the kingdom, and declare the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt in a public manner, I thought it my duty to do my beſt to make it manifeſt, according to my meaſure, by means of the preſs, (which is yet free, and has been, by the good providence of him that is "head over all things to the "church," made very uſeful in the recovery of Chriſtianity from the corruption of it by antichriſt); and ſo to offer my teſtimony againſt the prevailing errors of the day, and vindicate the preſent truth, "the word of Chriſt's patience," that has been condemned and rejected by our "builders."

I am very ſenſible, that, as it was never deſigned to pleaſe any faction or party of this world, no party will be altogether pleaſed with it. But there are two ſorts of men from which the goſpel met with oppoſition at the firſt, and which remain unto this day, though perhaps under other names: and from both I expect heavy cenſures.

1. They that affect a temporal kingdom to Chriſt, and a wordly church. Thus, "minding earthly things," and profeſſing diſſatisfaction with the Chriſtian doctrine of "patient "bearing the croſs after Chriſt," they would have the nations of this earth (now brought under the Chriſtian name, not by the influence of the goſpel, by which men were made Chriſtians at firſt, but by thoſe means which ſerved unto the treading of the outer court of God's houſe under the feet of the Gentiles)

Gentiles) to come in the room of God's ancient nation Iſrael; and they would have the powers of the earth, and kings of the nations, to be ſucceſſors to the rulers of that kingdom of God, eſpecially to the kings that ſat on the throne of David. Theſe men are much offended, it ſhould be now ſaid, that as there was a conſtant prefiguration of Chriſt, as a prophet and prieſt, in that earthly church, ſo it had a conſtant prefiguration of his kingdom. Their chief arguments are, ſigns, the fathers and martyrs, and the authority of the church, or of the clergy; but the ſtrength of their cauſe lies in deceit and violence: and from them, and thoſe that will be ſtirred up by them, they that will not be aſhamed of the teſtimony of our Lord, may expect the treatment of which he forewarns his followers, John xvi. 2.

2. Thoſe that are for natural religion new dreſſed, and having on the Chriſtian name, but really ſet up in oppoſition to Chriſtianity. Theſe are the wiſe men, the orators, the "diſ-"puters of this world." If any one of them ſhall condeſcend to take any notice of what's here ſaid, it will be treated by them with ſcorn and contempt, and with them it will paſs for nonſenſe, myſticiſm, and enthuſiaſm; and, notwithſtanding all their pretences to the generous principles of humanity, and liberty of conſcience, ſome of them can alſo perſecute.

The charge of enthuſiaſm was ſome time brought by the Epiſcopal faction againſt the men of the eſtabliſhed church; for when that faction, for the ſupport of their cauſe, embraced the Engliſh forms, and thoſe of the church ſpake of the ſpirituality of God's worſhip, and of praying in the ſpirit, there was a mighty cry among them againſt enthuſiaſm: and for a recompence of this their contempt of the ſpirit of Chriſt and his gifts, there came a ſort of ſpirit upon ſome of that faction, and they became downright enthuſiaſts, according to the word of our Lord, John v. 43. And it is alſo very remarkable, that the Lord hath, at this day, ſo far confounded the language of the builders of natural religion and morality, in oppoſition to true Chriſtianity, that they cannot underſtand one another about the very foundation of their building.

For my part, I cannot underſtand what ſhould be the deſign of the preſent cry againſt enthuſiaſm, if it be not to make us conclude, that becauſe there are falſe ſpirits, therefore there are none true; and ſo to fright us out of all ſpirituality, and every thing that's above nature in religion; and this in an age that does not ſeem to be in an humour for

any thing like ſpirituality. But it is ſurpriſing to ſee the men of the eſtabliſhed church, who were ſometimes ſufferers under the reproach of enthuſiaſm, beginning to talk in that ſame ſtyle wherein their party has been reproached. And even the Judaiſers will agree now in the accuſation of enthuſiaſm againſt the truths of Chriſt by me confeſſed, though themſelves ſhew full as great regard in ſome things, to their own experience, and that of their fathers and their prophecies, as they do to the written word of God.

Yet Chriſtians muſt not reject all ſpirits, leſt they ſin againſt the Spirit of Chriſt; and they muſt "try the ſpirits, "whether they be of God; becauſe many falſe prophets are "gone out into the world." And if, upon trial, they find any of the marks of an antichriſtian, or falſe ſpirit, upon the doctrine that I teach, I am content it be rejected. If I deny, that "Chriſt is come in the fleſh;" if I ſet up any thing that he came in the fleſh to deſtroy; if I ſeek to deſtroy any thing that he came in the fleſh to eſtabliſh; and if that wherein I differ from others do not carry in it a confeſſion, that he "is come in the fleſh:" then let my doctrine be rejected, as coming from a falſe ſpirit. If it ſavour not of that Spirit who "ſpeaks not of himſelf," but glorifies Chriſt, taking the things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them unto his people; and if I confeſs not "that Jeſus is the Chriſt," or "deny the "Father and the Son;" let me paſs for a liar, a deceiver, and an antichriſt. If I ſpeak of the world, and if the world hear me, let me be rejected, as one of thoſe falſe prophets that "are gone out into the world." If I hear not the word of the apoſtles of Chriſt, and if I reject or add any thing to their explication of the Old Teſtament prophecies, and uſe a private interpretation of my own, or of any ſet of men; if I ſpeak not according to the Old Teſtament and the New; let it be declared there is no light in my doctrine: and if I ſpeak any thing againſt the merciful ſpirit of the goſpel, or the goſpel-commandment of brotherly love, then let it be ſaid, that my "doctrine is not of God." See 1 John iv. 1.——8. But if it ſhall be found otherwiſe, let them that cry me down, and perſecute me, as a deceiver, and falſe teacher, &c. take care what manner of ſpirit they themſelves are of, and how they will anſwer to the judge that ſtands before the door; unto whom I commit my cauſe.

The

The TESTIMONY.

JOHN xviii. 36. 37.

Jeſus anſwered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my ſervants fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore ſaid unto him, Art thou a king then? Jeſus anſwered, Thou ſayeſt that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

CHAPTER I.

Of the prophecies of Chriſt's kingdom.

OUR Lord ſtands here before the Roman governor, accuſed of making himſelf the "king of the Jews," and ſo being againſt Cæſar, Luke xxiii. 1. 2. This accuſation is brought againſt him by men that were offended in him, becauſe he came not to them in a temporal kingdom, againſt Cæſar, as they themſelves deſired and expected; ſo it came very ill from them: and Pilate, who could not but know their expectations of the Meſſiah, might well underſtand, that "for envy they had delivered him," Matth. xxvii. 18.

In anſwer to this charge, our Lord denies not, but confeſſes himſelf to be the promiſed king, and owns his kingdom. Pilate had aſked him, verſ. 33. "Art thou the king "of the Jews?" He anſwers, "Sayeſt thou this thing of "thyſelf, or did others tell it thee of me?" Pilate being touched with this, as reſpecting his method of procedure in judgment, anſwers with a diſdain of the Jewiſh nation, and caſts the blame on the nation, and the chief prieſts, that had "delivered him to him." Here is an inſtance of church-rulers their delivering men to the civil magiſtrate to be puniſhed. Chriſt has forewarned his followers of this treatment; and this has been abundantly practiſed upon the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus by antichriſt: but he has never given any encouragement to his churches, or their overſeers, to take this courſe. Pilate inquires again, what he had done? Jeſus, in his anſwer, owns his kingdom; "my kingdom," and "my "ſervants."

" ſervants." From which Pilate infers that queſtion, " Art " thou a king then?" Jeſus anſwers, " Thou ſayeſt that I " am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe " came I into the world," *&c.*

It would ſeem, he ſhuns to own himſelf now the king of that nation of the Jews, who were denying him to be their king: neither does he own himſelf to be ſuch a king as the Jews were looking for, or as Pilate was now inquiring about. But he confeſſes that he is that king that was promiſed to the Jews, ſpoken of by their prophets, and that was to come of the Jews, Matth. xxvii. 11. Mark xv. 2. Luke xxiii. 3. " Art " thou the king of the Jews? Jeſus ſaid, Thou ſayeſt."

SECTION I.

JAcob, when bleſſing Judah, ſpake thus of him, Gen. xlix. 10. " The ſceptre ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a " lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and " unto him ſhall the gathering of the people be."

This prophecy imports, 1. That the chief government among the children of Iſrael, that were to become a great nation, ſhould be in the tribe of Judah, of which that Shiloh ſhould come: " For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and " of him the chief ruler," or prince, 1 Chron. v. 2.

2. That this government ſhould have its end and iſſue in that Shiloh to come; and when this government ſhould be utterly at an end, that Shiloh ſhould then certainly be come.

3. That this Shiloh ſhould have a collection of people under him obeying him; and when this ſhould take place, the ſceptre would depart from Judah.

Moſes, in bleſſing Judah, Deut. xxxiii. 7. referring unto Jacob's prophecy, ſays, " Hear the voice of Judah, and bring " him (*i. e.* Shiloh) unto his people."

But the moſt notable promiſe of this King, the Meſſiah, is that made to David, which we have recorded, 2 Sam. vii. 11.—16. "——And as ſince the time that I commanded " judges to be over my people Iſrael, and have cauſed thee to " reſt from all thine enemies. Alſo the Lord telleth thee, that " he will make thee an houſe. And when thy days be ful- " filled, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers, I will ſet up " thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall proceed out of thy bowels, " and I will eſtabliſh his kingdom. He ſhall build an houſe " for my name, and I will eſtabliſh the throne of his king- " dom for ever. I will be his father, and he ſhall be my " ſon.

" ſon. If he commit iniquity, I will chaſten him with the " rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men. " But my mercy ſhall not depart away from him, as I took " it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine " houſe, and thy kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever." " before thee: thy throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever." And, 1 Chron. xvii. 10.—14. "——And ſince the time that I " commanded judges to be over my people Iſrael. Moreover, " I will ſubdue all thine enemies. Furthermore, I tell thee, " that the Lord will build thee an houſe. And it ſhall come " to paſs, when thy days be expired, that thou muſt go to " be with thy fathers, that I will raiſe up thy ſeed after " thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and I will eſtabliſh his " kingdom. He ſhall build me an houſe, and I will eſtabliſh " his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he ſhall be " my ſon, and I will not take my mercy away from him, as " I took it from him that was before thee. But I will ſettle " him in mine houſe, and in my kingdom for ever, and his " throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore."

We may ſee in the following verſes how much David was affected with that promiſe, when he received it. This is the word upon which God cauſed him to hope, the covenant that God made with him. This great promiſe is much inſiſted on in the Pſalms, where it is ſeveral times particularly mentioned; as, in Pſal. lxxxix. 19.—36. and Pſal. cxxxii. 11. yea, throughout the Pſalms. And in the prophecies of the prophets that followed after David, this promiſe is explained upon and unfolded; as for inſtance, Iſ. ix. 6. 7. Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. and xxxiii. from the 15th verſe to the end. We find this promiſe alſo pointed at by the angel foretelling the birth of Chriſt to his mother, Luke i. 31. 32. 33.; and in the ſong of Zacharias, Luke i. 69. 70. And that deſignation, *The Son of David*, given to the promiſed Meſſiah by the Jews, and to Jeſus by them that believed in him, was taken from this promiſe. And it is to be noticed, that the great ſcope and ſenſe of this promiſe, and the fulfillment of it in Jeſus Chriſt, is declared in the firſt goſpel-ſermon after his aſcenſion, Acts ii. 30.—35. " Therefore being a prophet, " and knowing that God had ſworn with an oath to him, " that of the fruit of his loins, according to the fleſh, he " would raiſe up Chriſt, to ſit upon his throne," *&c.*

Now, if we conſider that promiſe made to David, we will find it was twofold, or had a twofold aſpect: firſt, to David's ſucceſſors in the throne of that ſame kingdom where David reigned

reigned in Jeruſalem on earth, 1 Chron. xxviii. 4.—7. 2 Kings viii. 19. 1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Chron. xxi. 7.; and then, chiefly, to the Meſſiah, for whoſe ſake the promiſe reſpecting David's temporal houſe was given. In the firſt reſpect, this promiſe was ſome way conditional; in the ſecond, it was abſolute: in the firſt reſpect it was but temporal, reaching the full end of it, and having its iſſue, in the Meſſiah; but as it reſpected him it was eternal: "Thine houſe and thy "kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever before thee; thy "throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever. I will ſettle him in "mine houſe, and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne "ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore."

And it is evident, that the promiſe of eſtabliſhing David's temporal houſe and his ſons upon that throne, had a reference to that which is eternal, and that ſeed of David eminently ſo called, even him who was to be ſettled in God's houſe and kingdom for evermore. That promiſe ſpake of him through theſe, and David's temporal houſe and kingdom, with his ſucceſſors on that throne, are ſet up in this promiſe as a pledge and a prefiguration of the Meſſiah in his throne and kingdom, which was the great thing intended in the promiſe. Thus God foreſhewed this great event by things as well as words. And there is no reaſon why God may not ſet up ſome things as pledges, and ſigns, and prefigurations or types of great events, and then plainly declare, that theſe events were intended in theſe ſigns and prefigurations of them.

David himſelf took up this promiſe as intending the Meſſiah, and his eternal kingdom, through his temporal kingdom. For when he was a-dying, and could not have much ſatisfaction in the promiſe as it was temporal, he ventures his departing ſoul with ſatisfaction on the eternal part of it; wherein he ſays, "He has all his ſalvation, and all his deſire, "whatever ſhould become of his temporal houſe." It will not be amiſs here to conſider thoſe dying words of David, which we have recorded, 2 Sam. xxiii. from the beginning to the 8th verſe. There is a tranſlation of the firſt verſe, which I ſuſpect is not alien from the ſenſe of the text. It is to this purpoſe: "David, the man who was raiſed up to be "inſtead of the Meſſiah of the God of Jacob in the ſweet "pſalms of Iſrael."

But whatever be in that, by the deſignations given unto him, and the intimation, that theſe are his laſt words, it appears, that we are called to take ſpecial notice of what follows,

lows, as a thing moſt remarkable, and worthy of all attention; and the more, if we conſider the ſolemn preface he himſelf puts to theſe his laſt words: for he plainly ſays, that they are not his own words, but the words of God; and inſinuates, that he is about to ſpeak of that which was the ſcope of what he had delivered as an inſpired prophet. Yea, it is more than probable, that he delivers his dying words in the name of the glorious perſons of the Godhead, as the word of all the three: "The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me, "and his word was in my tongue. The God of Iſrael ſaid, "the Rock of Iſrael ſpake to me." He is to ſpeak of that great buſineſs wherein theſe three divine perſons are all glorioufly manifeſted; and he mentions "the Rock of Iſrael," the Son, in the laſt place, becauſe what follows immediately is of him. For it cannot be imagined, that all this ſolemnity was deſigned to no other purpoſe, but to uſher in a deſcription of the duty of ordinary rulers in the kingdoms of this earth, and of the happineſs of their ſubjects under their right adminiſtration. And therefore thoſe interpreters have done beſt, who have taken it for a prophecy of the Meſſiah; reckoning, that whatever be ſaid here with reſpect to the government of the houſe of David, it chiefly points to the Meſſiah's kingdom. The words are variouſly rendered *; but however they be tranſlated, the kingdom of the Meſſiah is their ſcope. And there is no reaſon that I know of, why they may not be rendered thus: "To me ſpake the Rock of Iſ-"rael, the ruler over men, juſt, the ruler of the fear of "God;" or, "The Rock of Iſrael that is to rule in or over "men, juſt, that ſhall rule the fear of God."

* Our tranſlation is thus: "The Rock of Iſrael ſpake to me, "He that ruleth over men muſt be juſt," &c.; taking it, as it would ſeem, for a deſcription of the duty of rulers: yet, even according to this rendering, it may be a deſcription of him that ſhould rule in the church. Junius and Tremellius have it thus: *Mihi locuta eſt Rupes Iſraelis, Qui dominatur hominibus iſtis, juſtus eſto, dominans in timore Dei:* and for explication of *hominibus iſtis*, ſay, *Iſraelitis*. On our margin it is thus: "Be thou ruler over "men." And ſome render the foregoing words thus: "The "Rock of Iſrael ſpake of me," *i. e.* David, who was a type of the Meſſiah. The Dutch tranſlation has it thus: "The Rock "of Iſrael ſpake to me, There ſhall be a ruler," &c. And the notes ſay this ruler is the Meſſiah. The Vulgate verſion runs thus: *Locutus eſt fortis Iſrael dominator hominum, juſtus dominator in timore Dei.* And that of Arias Montanus is, *Mihi locutus Petra Iſrael dominans in homine, juſtus dominator timoris Dei.*

Thus it is a prophecy of David's Lord, the Rock of Iſrael himſelf, his ruling in the church and kingdom of God. Of this ruler, it is ſaid, that he is or ſhall be juſt; which may be explained by the words of Jeremiah, chap. xxiii. 5. 6. "I "will raiſe unto David a righteous branch; and a king ſhall "reign and proſper, and ſhall execute judgment and juſtice "in the earth.—And this is his name whereby he ſhall be "called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Thus he is the true Melchiſedek, and a prieſt on his throne, Pſal. cx. 4. Zech. vi. 13. Next, it is ſaid, "That he ruleth "the fear of God;" the worſhip and ſervice of God, or the whole of religion. To this purpoſe ſpeaks the prophet Iſaiah, chap. xi. 1. 2. 3. and the Apoſtle, Heb. xii. 28.; where he ſays, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom that "cannot be moved, let us have grace to ſerve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Such is his government, and the nature of his kingdom, and ſo it is diſtinguiſhed from all the kingdoms of this world.

David proceeds, in the next verſe, to deſcribe, by ſimilitudes, the government and kingdom of this ruler of the fear of God, which is as light out of darkneſs, increaſing from ſmall beginnings unto much greatneſs and glory, moſt benign and comfortable, and very beautiful and glorious, "as the "light of the morning," *&c.* And then, in ℣ 5. he profeſſes his full ſatisfaction in the faith and hope of this, whatever ſhould become of his temporal houſe, and the earthly kingdom in his family.

"Although my houſe" (my temporal houſe, and the kingdom in it, which alſo was ſpoke of in the promiſe) "be not "ſo with God," (as this kingdom of which I have been ſpeaking ſhall be; and though it do not anſwer to the deſcription I have given of God's ruler in the church, or do not behave ſuitably before God, as a type of that ruler and kingdom, and ſo do not abide with God); "yet he hath "made with me an everlaſting covenant," (he hath promiſed to me, that of the fruit of my body he will raiſe up that glorious King, the Meſſiah, to ſit on my throne, and that he will eſtabliſh his kingdom before me for ever; this is the everlaſting part of his covenant made with me, eſtabliſhing an eternal relation betwixt him and me), "ordered in "all things," (to anſwer all the ends of God's glory, and all the neceſſities of the church), "and ſure," (depending on no condition that ſhould any way make it void, as the promiſe reſpecting my temporal houſe and kingdom; and ſo it

can

can by no means fail): "for this is all my ſalvation, and "all my deſire," (I ſeek no other ſalvation, no other happineſs, but what is contained in this promiſe; and now, when leaving all time's things, and having no more place in the earthly Iſrael, I have full ſatisfaction in the expectation of this heavenly and eternal kingdom, which ſhall be eſtabliſhed before me, Heb xi. 13. 14. 16.), "although he make it not "to grow:" (though my typical houſe ſhall be diminiſhed, till it be cut off; though the ſceptre depart from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet, yet it is enough to me that Shiloh will come: though the tree of my royal family ſhould be cut down to the ground; yet out of the roots ſhall ſpring that branch of righteouſneſs: and in this am I ſatisfied, though this ſhould be the final end of my temporal houſe, that it may never more flouriſh).

In the two following verſes, which conclude thoſe laſt words of David, he deſcribes the enemies of this glorious King and his kingdom, their power, wicked enmity, and ſtubbornneſs, and their fearful end; ſhewing alſo, that the wicked ſhall have no abode in this kingdom of the Meſſiah: "But the ſons of Belial ſhall be all of them as thorns thruſt "away, becauſe they cannot be taken with hands," *&c.* Theſe are the laſt words of David; from which we may be ſatisfied, that the promiſe made to him did not only reſpect the temporal kingdom in his houſe, but, through that, refer unto the eternal kingdom of the Meſſiah, the Rock of Iſrael: for now, when he is leaving the world, he lets go the temporal part of the promiſe, and expects eternal ſalvation and happineſs by that eternal part of it, that was the chief thing to which every other thing in it had a reference; and, in compariſon of which, the raiſing of David and his houſe to rule in that earthly kingdom, was indeed but a ſmall thing; as he ſays, 2 Sam. vii. 19. "And this was yet a ſmall thing in "thy ſight, O Lord God; but thou haſt alſo ſpoken of thy "ſervant's houſe for a great while to come; and is this the "manner of man, O Lord God?"

And this is that promiſe made to David, of Meſſiah the King, ſo much inſiſted on in the Pſalms, and all the writings of the prophets that followed after David, which raiſed the expectations of the Jews, and of the accompliſhment of which they were ſtill the more deſirous after they ſaw David's temporal houſe brought low? But they wofully miſtook it, imagining it to be a promiſe of a glorious earthly prince, and a ſplendid worldly kingdom. Unto this purpoſe they made

uſe of thoſe figures taken from David's temporal kingdom, and ſuch other figures as the prophets made uſe of to ſet forth beforehand the ſpiritual and eternal things of the kingdom of Chriſt; and under the influence of this fatal miſtake, they rejected Jeſus, and delivered him up to Pilate.

SECT. II.

JEſus being queſtioned, denies not, but confeſſes, that he is that ſame King promiſed to the Jews; and by this we may know, from the prophecies, who he is.

For, 1. It behoved the Meſſiah, according to the prophets, to be of the fruit of David's body, a true man of the ſeed of David. The Jews knew well, from the prophecies, that the Chriſt was to be David's ſon; as appears from their anſwer to our Lord's queſtion, "What think ye of Chriſt? whoſe ſon "is he?" for they "ſay unto him, The ſon of David," Matth. xxii. 41. 42.; and they that believed Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, deſigned him *The Son of David.*

The prophecies pointed him out as thus to be of David when David's family ſhould be diminiſhed and brought very low; they repreſented him as a branch ſpringing out of the "root of Jeſſe," Iſ. xi. 1.: ſo that when he ſhould come, he ſhould be "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry "ground, having nothing of that form or comelineſs" that his deſpiſers were looking after, Iſ. liii. 2.

The New Teſtament teſtifies of Jeſus, that he is of the fruit of David's loins according to the fleſh, and of the ſeed of David according to the fleſh; and thus explains the prophecies, declaring their accompliſhment in him, Acts ii. 30. Rom. i. 3. This phraſe, "according to the fleſh," ſeems to have more than one import, when applied to Jeſus Chriſt. For, 1. It plainly points out his human nature as diſtinguiſhed from his divine. 2. It alſo denotes human nature in its mortal ſtate, with the miſeries and infirmities of that ſtate: for he took part with us in fleſh and blood, that he might die, and was tempted in all things like us, yet without ſin. 3. It further imports his being a Jew; for he "was a miniſter of the circumciſion to confirm the promiſes "made unto the fathers." In this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſays, 2 Cor. v. 16. "Though we have known Chriſt after the "fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Thus fleſh is oppoſed to ſpirit, Gal. iii. 3. "Having begun in the "ſpirit, are ye now made perfect by the fleſh?" 1 Tim. iii. 16. "God was manifeſted in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit."

1 Pet.

1 Pet. iii. 18. "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened "ed by the spirit."

Thus now our Lord was made of the seed of David, and so of the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh; and thus the promises made unto the fathers have their confirmation in him, the true promised seed. But the prophecies spake of his coming into the world as something very extraordinary, Is. vii. 14. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth "a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL." Compare Jer xxxi. 22. "The Lord hath created a new thing in the "earth, a woman shall compass a man." There are difficulties moved about this prophecy; but if we can believe, that men may be encouraged, under present distress, to expect relief, and engaged in their duty, by the faith of future things, upon which their eternal salvation depends, especially when these things to come have a necessary influence upon that relief, and upon their doing present duty, (Heb. xi. 1. &c.) there will be no reason to question that it is a prophecy of the birth of Christ; and it ill becomes them to question it who own the authority of the New Testament. Matth. i. 22. 23. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was "spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a vir-"gin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and "and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being "interpreted, is, God with us." So it behoved Christ to be a man conceived, and born by a woman, a virgin. This was pointed at in the first promise of him, Gen. iii. 15. "the "woman's seed." And some of the learned have thought the same thing intended in the name SHILOH, given to the Messiah in Jacob's prophecy. [See Rivet upon the place.]

This great thing is declared by the angel that told Mary, the mother of Jesus, that she should bring forth the great Son of David, the King of Israel, Luke i. 34. 35. "Then said Ma-"ry unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a "man? And the angel answered, and said unto her, The "Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the "Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy "thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son "of God."

There is a threefold miracle wrought here by the power of the Highest, working in a most holy and mysterious manner. 1. The making the womb of the virgin fruitful, so that she conceived and brought forth a son. 2. The bringing of that holy thing, the human nature, the soul and body of

of Jeſus Chriſt, out of a ſinful woman. This man came not into the world by virtue of that command to our firſt parents before the fall, "Be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth;" for all that have come into the world that way, have been partakers with Adam in his ſin; but he came into the world by virtue of that promiſe made for the recovery of ſinners, "The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent." According to this promiſe, that "holy thing" was born of the virgin, by his power with whom nothing ſhall be impoſſible; and by this means he is related unto his people, that are reckoned with him in that promiſe, in oppoſition to the ſerpent's ſeed; and by virtue of their relation to this Holy One, they are ſanctified by him, Heb. ii. 11. 14. "For both he that ſanctifieth, and they that are ſanctified, "are all of one: for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call "them brethren. Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took "part of the ſame; that through death he might deſtroy him "that had the power of death, that is, the devil." 3. But the greateſt wonder of all is, that this "holy thing," the ſoul and body, or human nature of Chriſt, ſhould be no other perſon but the Son of God, who took to himſelf this holy thing, that it might be as verily his ſoul and body, as our ſouls and bodies are ours: "Becauſe the children were partakers of "fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the "ſame." The human nature of Chriſt is not a perſon by itſelf; the perſon is the Son of God: for, ſays the angel, "that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called "the Son of God." This is the great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh; of which reaſon ſays, "How "can this be?" becauſe it can find nothing like unto it, nothing wherewith to compare it, either in the height above, or in the deeps below: but faith credits God's teſtimony in the goſpel, and ſays, "Jeſus is the Son of God;" and bleſſed are they that believe. This wonderful union of the divine and human nature in the perſon of the Son of God, may be ſome way repreſented to us, in his conception in the womb of the virgin without a man, by the Holy Ghoſt, the power of the Higheſt, overſhadowing her.

But this leads to another thing ſpoken of Meſſiah the King, by the prophets. For,

2. They alſo ſet him forth as God; and foretell, that this man, this Son of David, ſhould be a truly divine perſon; even that perſon of the Godhead who is ſtiled "The rock of "Iſrael"

" Iſrael" by David, in making mention of all the three. Of this, it ſeems, thoſe Jews knew not ſo much, who could not anſwer that queſtion, Matth. xxii. 42.—45. " How then doth " David in ſpirit call him Lord?· If David then call him " Lord, how is he his ſon?" They knew not how he could be David's God and his King, and yet his ſon. But the high prieſt, and they that propoſed that queſtion to him, " Art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed?" the Son of God? and condemned him for blaſphemy when he confeſſed it, (Matth. xxvi. 63. 64. 65.; Mark xiv. 61.—64.; Luke xxii. 67.—71.; John xix. 7. 8.), ſeemed to have ſome notion, from the prophecies, of the Meſſiah's being God.

The prophets give him the higheſt names and titles of the Supreme God; ſuch as, " Jehovah," Jer xxiii. 6. Pſal. xcvii. 1. *&c.* " The Lord God," Iſaiah xl. 10. 11. " The " Lord of hoſts," Iſaiah viii. 13. 14. See alſo for this, Pſal. xxiv. 10. which pſalm is a prophecy of the Meſſiah and his kingdom, who is there deſigned " The King of glory;" and his ſolemn entrance into heaven, the ſeat of his kingdom, is there deſcribed; as it is alſo Pſal. xlvii. from ℣ 5. and Pſal. lxviii. 18. The queſtion is made concerning this King of glory, who he is? and the anſwer to this queſtion is, " The " Lord of hoſts, he is the King of glory." The King of glory is a title of the Meſſiah, importing his glorious dominion and kingdom; and if this title, " The Lord of hoſts," imported no more than this dominion, the queſtion, in that caſe, would not be anſwered; for all that is expreſſed, fully, by the title, " The King of glory:" and therefore that title, " The " Lord of hoſts," imports more, even his Supreme Godhead; and that he is " that moſt High God," beſides whom there is no God.

He is ſet forth in the prophecies as the creator of the world. So we have him in the beginning of that xxivth Pſalm; and the ciid Pſalm, which is alſo a prophecy of the Meſſiah's kingdom, declares him " the eternal and unchangeable crea- " tor of the heavens and the earth." See ℣ 25. 26. 27. and compare Heb. i. 10. 11. 12. and many other Old Teſtament ſcriptures might be cited to this purpoſe. Now, the creation of the world is that work whereby the Moſt High God, beſide whom there is no God, is every where diſtinguiſhed in his word; and it is expreſsly declared, that he " ſtretched " forth the heavens alone, and ſpread abroad the earth by " himſelf," Iſaiah xliv. 24.

The adverſaries of the true Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt, inſiſt much

much upon the manner of ſpeaking of him as creator in the New Teſtament, where they would have the world's being ſaid to be created by him, to import his being only a ſubordinate cauſe, or his acting as an inſtrument only in that great work. But though it ſhould be allowed, that he acted in that work as being ſet up from everlaſting, to be mediator, and head over all things to the church, and preparing, as it were, a ſcene for acting that glorious work of redemption, and laying all things that were made, in a ſubſerviency unto his glorious kingdom, Prov. viii. Eph. iii. 9. Heb. i. Col. i.; yet ſtill there was none beſide the "Moſt High God" employed in that work. Whatever was the capacity, therefore, in which he acted, the work he did, abundantly demonſtrates his "eternal power and godhead;" and that the Father hath no other godhead, but that very ſame which he alſo hath, and can challenge as his own, even as the Father.

His work of creation is not that which makes him God; but it clearly manifeſts him to be the only true God. It is not the reaſon for which he is God; but it doth evidently diſcover unto the reaſon of creatures, that whoever wrought it is the "only true God," Rom. i. 20. And ſcripture-revelation ſhews, that there was none but that God employed in that work; and that the ſame perſon who is the Chriſt, the King of the church, wrought that ſame work. So that whatever was the capacity wherein he acted in the creation, it clearly ſhews, that he is, and was before the world, the only eternal and almighty Lord God.

And when this divine perſon condeſcends to act in ſubordination to the Father, with a view to the redemption of ſinners of mankind, yet ſo as his true Godhead appears glorioufly in all the works to which he thus condeſcends, it is the higheſt ingratitude in men to go about to diſparage him, on account of that ſame condeſcenſion. Neither will it excuſe them, that they are moved unto this by this reaſon, That they cannot ſatisfy their underſtandings, how three truly diſtinct perſons can have the ſame very Godhead, ſo that of every one of them it may be truly ſaid, He is the only true God, beſide whom there is no God. For this is to ſay, that the incomprehenſible God can reveal nothing of himſelf, but what they can underſtand; and they are concerned to credit the divine teſtimony no further than they can ſatisfy themſelves about the reaſonableneſs of that which he teſtifies.

Yet they have never been able to ſhow an inconſiſtency in this myſtery, no not ſuch as appears in many things of the truth

truth of which they are ſatisfied by Nature's light. And even the inconſiſtencies of which they are not able to rid their own notions of the divine eternity, omnipreſence, and omniſcience, do not oblige them to quit thoſe notions. But whatever appears in ſcripture-revelation with the leaſt air of inconſiſtency, puts them immediately upon that old inquiry, "Hath God ſaid ſo?" And by this, he that firſt propoſed that queſtion, can eaſily "blind the minds of them that be-"lieve not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt," the image of God, "ſhould ſhine unto them," while he fills their minds with the fancy of being or becoming as gods for knowledge.

Now, while they look down upon us with pity or diſdain, as an inferior kind of creatures, that, for lack of underſtanding, or being impoſed upon by ſome crafty ſpirit, and enthuſiaſts, believe myſteries, and credit contradictions; if we inquire for the contradiction in that which we believe, they tell us, it is a plain principle in nature and reaſon, "That "God is but one intelligent agent, and that intelligent agent "and perſon are one and the ſame; and ſo it is impoſſible, "that one, and but one intelligent agent and perſon, can "yet be three intelligent agents or perſons."

But we are not yet ſatisfied, by all thoſe words thus ſet together, that perſonality enters at all into the idea we have of the Deity by Nature's light. The eternal power and Godhead of the Firſt Cauſe is clearly ſeen by the things that are made, and the wiſdom of the Godhead is conſpicuous in them: but ſince the idea of perſonality ſerves to diſtinguiſh to us thoſe intelligent agents that we cannot diſtinguiſh by the ideas we have of their natures, as intelligent agents; which, though we repeat them ever ſo oft, are the ſame; and ſince the Divine Being is infinitely diſtinguiſhed from all other beings, in the notion we have of it by Nature's light; the idea of perſonality is of no manner of uſe here. And ſeeing the idea of perſonality includes diſtinct mutual relations and offices, whereby we diſtinguiſh theſe, that cannot be diſtinguiſhed by the idea of their nature, common to both, (and there is ſomething real at the bottom of this diſtinction, whereof we have no idea); it is evident, that as the idea of one human perſon neceſſarily infers another human perſon, and the idea of one angelic perſon neceſſarily infers another angelic perſon, with whom he is one way or other related, and from whom he is diſtinguiſhed in and by that relation, when he cannot be diſtinguiſhed from him by the common idea of

their nature: ſo if we think of one divine perſon, this neceſſarily infers another divine perſon. Of this Nature's light diſcovers nothing, but ſhews one Godhead, and but one, infinitely diſtinguiſhed from all other beings by itſelf, and that another God is impoſſible. Scripture-revelation leaves this entire and full, and aſſerts it fully; but unto this it adds the idea of perſonality, which implies in it more ſuch perſons than one, and reveals three perſons in this one Godhead, mutually related, and acting diſtinct parts, with relation unto one another, (which could not have been acted by one ſingle perſon, or by any but divine perſons); and that in a work wherein the one Godhead and divine attributes ſhine forth more than in any other work of God, and unto which all the other works of God are ſubſervient. Nature's light could not diſcover this; but cannot contradict it: for though we uſe to infer diſtinct natures from diſtinct perſons among men, finite creatures, among whom alſo there is no neceſſity for one's being two perſons, ſeeing another may be made to anſwer all the purpoſes for which that man could be ſuppoſed to be two perſons; yet ſuch an inference cannot be applied unto the Deity, without meaſuring infinite by finite, and intruding into thoſe things which we have not ſeen, and uſing Nature's light unto a purpoſe unto which it was not deſigned, and which it cannot anſwer; yea and without a contempt of this glorious diſcovery of the Godhead made in this revelation.

Thus it is evident, that whatever notions we have of the Deity naturally, he that "denieth the Son," the ſame "hath "not the Father;" and he that "knoweth not" that divine perſon the Son, "knows as" little of the Father. The Jews eſteemed themſelves free in the houſe or church of God, and held themſelves for the children of God, which yet they could not be any otherwiſe but by being the children of the Father of Jeſus Chriſt; and his children they were not, as appeared by their unbelief and enmity againſt his Son the Chriſt: yea they did not know the Father; though by calling themſelves the children of God, they called the Father of Jeſus Chriſt their God; ſince none are the children of God but they that have the Father of Chriſt for their father; and God is not the God of any but them to whom the Father of Chriſt is a father, John viii. 41. 42. and 54. —— "It is my "Father that honoureth me, of whom ye ſay that he is your "God," ℣ 55. "Yet ye have not known him." The ſame thing, with the ſame view, may be ſaid to the adverſaries of the true Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt. They pretend mightily to honour

honour the Father, and claim intereſt in him, and in his church; while, in the mean time, they diſhonour the Son, whom the Father honoureth, and would have all men to honour, even as they honour him; and hereby it is evident they have not known the Father, and that they really honour the Father as little as they honour the Son.

And thus they do indeed make void ſcripture-revelation, while they pretend to receive it, by ſubjecting it to Nature's light, and holding themſelves for maſters of that light. But here they tell us, we can, upon occaſion, uſe as much freedom with the ſcriptures, and make as much uſe of reaſon in explaining them as they, in ſome caſes; and ſo fall under our own cenſure: and they inſiſt much on theſe two inſtances, God's ſpeaking of himſelf as having bodily parts, and the matter of tranſubſtantiation.

As to the firſt of theſe: That manner of ſpeaking, as if God had bodily parts, is abundantly juſtified in the great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh, and has a ſufficient foundation in his taking part with us in fleſh and blood. And it was no way unbecoming God, to ſpeak thus of himſelf, after the manner of man, with a view to this great myſtery, in the revelation of which he is moſt gloriouſly manifeſted.

And as for tranſubſtantiation, it had never entered into the minds of men, if it had not been upon occaſion of the revelation of that ſpiritual myſtery, of eating the fleſh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. The Jews, who took up that ſpiritual ſaying of our Lord in a carnal ſenſe, conceiving that he ſpake of his body in the ſame manner as the Iſraelites eated the manna, the type of it, thought this impoſſible, and ſo rejected the revelation. But others came after them, who, profeſſing to own the revelation, found themſelves obliged to own, that there is an eating of Chriſt's body, and drinking of his blood, in his ſupper. They knew nothing of the ſpiritual myſtery of faith in this matter; and ſo were forced to have recourſe to the notion of the unbelieving Jews, about eating this fleſh, though againſt our Lord's expreſs declaration, John vi. 63. For they could not make a better of it: they were obliged either to reject the revelation, as the Jews; or embrace that carnal notion, (which is indeed inconſiſtent), for want of a ſpiritual diſcerning of the truth. Even as they that believe not the true Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt, not having faith's diſcerning of the myſtery of the Trinity, are forced to maintain a ſuperior and inferior God,

ſuperior and inferior divine worſhip, a ſuperior and inferior creator, and to imagine ſomething between God and the creature, which is neither the moſt high independent God, nor a creature; or to aſcribe the divine properties to a creature: all which is repugnant both to ſcripture and reaſon. For what can they do? They find themſelves ſome way obliged to own the truth of the ſcriptures; they have not, or will not have the faith of this myſtery, and ſo they muſt take up with ſuch notions about it as they have. Thus they that will not believe divine myſteries, becauſe they cannot reach them with their reaſon, are forced to take up with more unreaſonable inconſiſtent opinions, receiving therein the recompenſe of their error; ſo "profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they be-"come fools."

When thoſe men harden themſelves in their unbelief, or ſeek to diminiſh the great importance of this article of our faith, by ſignifying, that this doctrine is not expreſsly declared in ſcripture-revelation, and that it is ſuch a doctrine, that unleſs it were very expreſsly revealed, they cannot be ſo much condemned for not believing it, they bring to mind that paſſage which we have John x. 24. 25. "Then came the Jews round about "him, and ſaid unto him, How long doſt thou make us to "doubt? If thou be the Chriſt, tell us plainly. Jeſus an-"ſwered them, I told you, and ye believed not." It was a very hard matter for the Jews, conſidering their prejudices, to believe that ſuch a man as Jeſus was their Chriſt, and a matter of the utmoſt importance it was for them to know him to be the Chriſt; and when they got ſigns, they wanted clearer, more evident ſigns; when it was told them, they wanted to be more plainly told; they complained of the darkneſs of the revelation of a point ſo important, ſo ſhocking to them, and that it was never told them plainly, ſo as they could not, by interpreting words and phraſes, have it to ſay, that the words wherein it was told them were capable of ſome other meaning; yet they died in their ſins, becauſe they believed it not. God hath revealed this great doctrine ſufficiently for enlightening the minds of his people, and making unbelievers inexcuſeable; though not in ſuch terms as ſuch unbelievers would have it propoſed unto them, nor with that ſort of evidence which they would deſire who ſlight and oppoſe the evidence that God thought fit to give. "Jeſus anſwered, I told you, and ye believed not." When he anſwered the chief prieſt and his company as plainly as they deſired, they condemned him for a blaſphemer. And

though

though this doctrine be revealed in the moſt ſuitable manner, for begetting and increaſing the faith of it in the minds of them that are ordained to eternal life; yet if it were revealed in any way wherein it could be now ſuppoſed to be declared, we might promiſe upon theſe men, continuing in the diſpoſition wherein they ſeem to be, that they would either diſtinguiſh away the ſenſe of that revelation, and cry for a clearer ſtill, or utterly reject the revelation. But we may yet have a farther view of the perſon of the Meſſiah from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament. For,

Theſe prophecies alſo ſet him forth as the object of religious worſhip; ſo that Jeſus confeſſing himſelf to be that promiſed King, does thereby acknowledge, that he is the object of that worſhip; and therefore the only true God. We find the angels, that ſort of creatures that (in the regard of idolaters) poſſeſſed the room only due to him, the Mediator, who is indeed God, and who are therefore called Gods, are commanded "to worſhip him," who is Jehovah, the true God, the glorious King of the church, Pſal. xcvii. 1.—7. compare Heb. i. 6. And in Pſal. cii. where he is declared to be the creator of the world, we have him alſo pointed out to us as the object of religious worſhip, prayer, and praiſe in the church, on account of the glory of his Godhead, appearing in his great work of redemption, and in his building of the church, and in the glorious acts of his reign, from ℣ 15. to ℣ 23. See to this purpoſe Pſal. xcv. xcvi. xcvii. xcviii. xcix. c. all prophecies of the Meſſiah and his kingdom. See likewiſe Pſal. ciii. 19.—22. Pſal. lxv. 1.—5. and Pſal. xlvii. &c. &c.

The ſcripture makes no diſtinction in the buſineſs of religious worſhip, but aſcribes it only and wholly to God, on account of the Godhead manifeſted in the glorious works of creation and redemption. And if there are not higher expreſſions of religious worſhip in ſcripture, than thoſe that are uſed in the prophetic calls, to worſhip this glorious King, the Meſſiah; his glorious Godhead, manifeſting itſelf in his works of creation and redemption, and in his glorious kingdom to be ſet up in the fullneſs of time, is plainly given as the reaſon why he ſhould be worſhipped in his kingdom the church by angels and men. The typical redemption of the nation of Iſrael out of Egypt, and bringing of that nation through the wilderneſs into the promiſed land, carried in it ſuch a diſtinguiſhing diſcovery of the glorious Godhead of the worker of it, as intitled him to the religious worſhip of Iſrael, and made

them

them wholly without excuſe in worſhipping any other God beſides that God that ſo fulfilled his promiſe to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob. Therefore this God ſpake thus from Sinai: "I am the Lord thy God which hath brought thee out "of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage. Thou "ſhalt have no other gods before me." This voice was the voice of the ſame whoſe blood ſpeaketh to us from heaven, Heb. xii. 24. 25. 26.

The Father never appeared, never ſpake, but in and by the Son; his word and his ſpirit was with him, Iſ. lxiii. 9. 10. 11. Hag. ii. 5. Of old the Father appeared, and ſpake by him more darkly, while he was only foreſhewing his incarnation in his appearances, and in divers figures, and ſhewing beforehand in dark promiſes, and manifold earthly types, the glorious heavenly things of the New Teſtament; but now, being incarnate, and having come in his kingdom, the Father is more clearly manifeſt, and ſpeaks more clearly in him, "the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his "perſon;" and being partaker with us in fleſh and blood, he is alſo to us inſtead of the prophets, by whom he ſpake of old to the people of Iſrael, Heb. i. 1. 2.

It was he then that appeared of old, and the Father never but in him, "the angel of his preſence," or, "his face." Moſes knew well to diſtinguiſh this face of God, this angel of God's preſence, from any created angel. See Exod. xxxiii. Thus the angel in whom is God's name is the ſame that ſpake to Moſes in the buſh, ſaying, "I am the God of "Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob," and that ſpake to him in Mount Sinai, Acts vii. 38. and whoſe voice was conveyed to the people of Iſrael by the miniſtry of angels that miniſtred to him there. And he ſaid, "I am the Lord thy God; thou "ſhalt have no other gods beſides me." Neither was it any idolatry in the Iſraelites to ſay to him, "Thou art the Lord "our God that brought us out of Egypt; we will have no "god beſides thee." And there was no fear of worſhipping another beſide the only God, in worſhipping him, as there would been in worſhipping any created angel, however commiſſioned by God, however ſpeaking in his name. This is he that led Iſrael out of Egypt into Canaan, and therein manifeſted himſelf to be the only true God, beſides whom Iſrael was to have no other god: for "the Lord alone led Iſ-"rael, and there was no ſtrange god with him," Deut. xxxii. 12.

Now, if that typical and earthly redemption of the nation Iſrael

Iſrael ſo manifeſted the divine glory of the worker of it, as to give him juſt title to inherit Iſrael's praiſe; how much more does the glory of his true Godhead appear in the ſpiritual and eternal redemption wrought by him for the true Iſrael, the heavenly nation, and in "bringing many ſons unto glo-"ry," and in all the glorious acts of his reign in his heavenly kingdom, and calls for the worſhip and adoration of angels and men? He receives this worſhip from the redeemed, and from all the angels of God, aſcribing to him the infinite dignity and worth of his Godhead that appears to them in that glorious redemption which is by his blood, Rev. v. 9.—12.

For whatever they may think who know not the holineſs, infinite juſtice, and terrible majeſty of God, and the unſpeakable evil of ſin, as it is againſt him, and that moſt deſperate condition, and dreadful complication of innumerable evils, flowing from the guilt of ſin, and the curſe of a broken law, out of which we are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt; yet the ſelf-condemned ſinner, that has ſome true apprehenſion of theſe things, and ſo ſees the great vanity and folly of all attempts to make an amends to the majeſty of God for the exceeding ſinfulneſs of his ſin, or any way to relieve himſelf from his deſperate condition, and weeps becauſe he cannot find worth enough in any creature wherewith to preſent himſelf, and appear with confidence before the Moſt High; ſuch a ſinner cannot put confidence in the blood of Chriſt, nor be relieved from his fears, ſo as to come confidently before God by it, till he be perſuaded in very deed, that it is the blood of God, and that the blood of that man is the blood of no other but that glorious and divine perſon, who is worthy, with all the independent eternal worth that is in the only Godhead. Such a ſinner being perſuaded, by the Holy Ghoſt, that dwells in the ſlain Lamb, to come unto the Father by this blood, will give divine worſhip and glory to the Lamb, without any fear of his honouring a perſon who is not the only true God, beſides whom there is no god, and will count him worthy to reign in his glorious kingdom, on account of that his Godhead appearing in redeeming us by his blood. While men are utter ſtrangers to theſe things, they may have fruitleſs philoſophical notions about the Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt; but they will "hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs;" and may, by a ſuitable temptation, be prevailed with to part with it at a cheaper

cheaper rate than they that have come by it in ſuch a way as this.

The kingdom of the Meſſiah is founded in his redemption; as the prophets declare, Iſ. liii. toward the cloſe, Pſal. cx. 7. Pſal. xxii. *&c.* And his Godhead is ſet forth as appearing in his kingdom, and calling for divine worſhip from all his ſubjects. It is true, in his kingdom he hath condeſcended to reign by commiſſion from the Father, even as he gave himſelf for his church to redeem it at the Father's appointment, and he is in his kingdom the Father's repreſentative; for how otherwiſe ſhould the Father and the divine glory in his perſon appear unto us? But as he could not fully repreſent him in the church, his kingdom, if he were not an equal perſon to him, and truly diſtinct from him, in one and the ſame Godhead; ſo, by this very commiſſion, the Father gives his glory into his hands, which yet he will not give to another god. So we find in that prophecy where he is appointed the Father's ſervant, Iſ. xlii. from the beginning, that work which he calls his glory, and for which he is praiſed, even the bringing forth of judgment to the Gentiles, opening the blind eyes, and bringing the priſoners from the priſon, is given into the hand of this his ſervant to be accompliſhed by him: and then he declares, "I am the Lord, that is my name, and "my glory I will not give to another, neither my praiſe "to graven images." This ſervant of his therefore muſt be the ſame God with him, who will not give his glory unto another, and yet gives it to him.

Thus the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, "that all men ſhould honour the Son even as they ho-"nour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honour-"eth not the Father which hath ſent him," John v. 22. 23.

Whatever be the capacity wherein this glorious perſon acts, whatever condeſcenſion he uſe for our ſakes, as Mediator, we ought nevertheleſs to honour him; and religious worſhip is declared to be his due on account of his divine glory manifeſting itſelf in his acting in that ſame capacity to which he thus condeſcends. And ſince the only true God appropriates all religious worſhip, without any diſtinction, to himſelf, and diſcharges us to give any part or portion of it, or any ſenſe of it, unto any other; on any account, or to hearken to any prophet, though working miracles, to induce us to give this worſhip to another, Deut. xiii. 1.—5.; and ſince we are called to give religious worſhip to this King, the

the Meſſiah, it is manifeſt, that he is the only true God, "beſide whom there is no God."

Upon the whole, we may ſee in the prophecies, ſome of which have been pointed at, that this glorious King, the Meſſiah, is ſet forth as the fruit of David's body, a real man of the ſeed of David; yet not a human, but a truly divine perſon, Jehovah, the Lord of Hoſts, the Lord God, the almightly Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the bleſſed object of the religious worſhip and adoration of angels and men. So he is the child born to us, the ſon given to us, who is the mighty God; the ſon conceived, and brought forth by a virgin, whoſe name is Immanuel, God with us; the ſeed of the woman, who is able to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent; the ſeed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth may find eternal bleſſedneſs; and David's ſon, who yet is his Lord, his God, and his everlaſting King. Jeſus confeſſes all this of himſelf, and acknowledges, that he is that ſame glorious perſon, in whom the divine and human natures are thus marvelouſly united, by his owning, before Pilate, that he is "that promiſed King." And when he ſays, "To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into "the world," he ſeems to point to that prophecy of the Meſſiah, Iſ. ix. 6. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a ſon "is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder," *&c.* Thus the eternal God reigns as King, the church's maker is her huſband, and her Redeemer the Lord of Hoſts, and her God is her glory.

Whoſoever confeſſes Jeſus to be Chriſt, confeſſes this ſame great truth concerning his perſon: and it is a vain thing to pretend to confeſs that he is the Chriſt, and yet deny his true Godhead, or not truly own him to be the Son of God; as it is to pretend to confeſs him the Chriſt, and yet deny him to be the ſon of David. It is true, the word *Meſſiah*, or *Chriſt*, ſignifying anointed, reſpects his office; but we miſtake that office, and cannot ſee the glory of it, nor improve it unto its proper ends, ſo as to find all ſalvation and all deſire in it, if we do not ſee him to be God in that office; and if we view him rightly by faith in his ſaving office, we will find all the perſons of the Godhead therein manifeſted, and concerned in our ſalvation thereby. It is only in Jeſus the Chriſt, that we know the Father; for he "is "the image of the inviſible God;" and it is only in him that we find the Holy Ghoſt, "that dwells in him." It has been an old obſervation, that we cannot think rightly of the Chriſt, without thinking of the glorious perſon anointing,

and the Holy Ghoſt, wherewith he was anointed, Pſal. xiv. 6. 7. Heb. i. 8. 9. And it may be obſerved, that ſomething of the Godhead, including all the divine attributes, ſeems to be peculiarly repreſented to us in each of theſe perſons, as they appear in and by the ſaving office of Chriſt. The majeſty of the Godhead in the perſon of the Father, who is therefore ſtyled God; the infinite worth and dignity of the ſame very Godhead, in the perſon of the Son; and the infinite ſufficiency and power of that ſame very Godhead in the perſon of the Holy Ghoſt.

Now, the ſaving office of Chriſt is threefold. He is prophet, prieſt, and king. And though theſe three offices be truly diſtinct, and ought not to be confounded; yet we cannot rightly conceive of him as king, and of his kingdom, without the other two offices; as may appear afterward; and his anointing is much ſpoke of in the prophecies with reſpect unto his kingdom, Pſal. ii. Pſal. xlv. It is of this that we now ſpeak, and this anointing of Chriſt the King has a manifeſt reference unto the anointing of David, and thoſe kings that were but earthly ſigns of this heavenly King.

SECT. III.

ACcording to the promiſe made to David, wherein we obſerved, that the kingdom, in his earthly houſe, was ſet up as a pledge, ſign, and figure of that great kingdom of the Meſſiah; when Jeſus confeſſes, that he is that promiſed King, he owns himſelf to be the antitype of thoſe kings, and that he is unto his ſubjects inſtead of them, and that his kingdom is the thing we have now inſtead of that kingdom, which hath its end and iſſue in this.

This ſeems pretty clear from Jacob's prophecy, and from the promiſe to David, as it has been explained; and that ſame prophecy, to which we noticed a little before that our Lord here refers, ſpeaks this to Chriſtians very clearly, Iſ. ix. 6. 7. "Unto us a child is born.——Of the increaſe of his "government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the "throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it," *&c.* It is manifeſt David's ſons ſucceeded him, and ſat for ſeveral ages on his throne in the kingdom of Judah, Jer. xxii. 30.; and it is alſo manifeſt, that the kingdom wherein Chriſt rules, and the throne upon which he ſits, is not that ſame very throne and kingdom where David and his ſucceſſors ſat and ruled, and can be no otherwiſe called that throne and kingdom,

dom, but as it is the thing typified thereby, according to God's promiſe, and the only thing that we have now inſtead of it, when the earthly ſhadows of heavenly things have their end and iſſue in the heavenly things themſelves that are come in the place of them.

The kingdom wherein David and his ſucceſſors ruled was God's kingdom, or the church; the throne of that kingdom was the throne of the Lord; the people were God's flock; and David's ſucceſſors were paſtors of that flock; their office, however they miſbehaved in it, was to "feed the ſheep "of his paſture," Jer. xxiii. 1. 2.

That flock of God brought up out of Egypt by a temporal and typical redemption, and made a peculiar people unto God, was no more but a typical flock of God, the antitype of which is that ſpiritual flock, gathered out of all nations as the Jews were brought back from Babylon, and gathered out of the places where they had been ſcattered and in captivity; even the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are written in heaven. And the paſtors of that typical flock, of whoſe wicked miſcarriages the Lord complains, were types of the true ſhepherd, who is one for all, and is better unto the flock of God than them all, even the righteous branch that the Lord hath now raiſed up unto David. I confeſs I cannot otherwiſe explain Jer. xxiii. 1.—5. and apply the prophecy, as Chriſtians will own it muſt be applied, unto the Meſſiah and his kingdom; nor will it be eaſy otherwiſe to explain the moſt part of the prophecies concerning Chriſt and his kingdom, ſpeaking almoſt conſtantly of the antitype by the types. And I queſtion not but it was inadvertency to this that ſtood in the way, and does unto this day ſtand in the way of the Jews, their acknowledging Jeſus to be the promiſed Meſſiah, the King of Iſrael.

Chriſtians generally acknowledge now, (though neither was that altogether ſo clear to the Jews who firſt believed), that Chriſt, our prieſt, is in that his office the antitype of the prieſts that were in the Old-Teſtament church, and that their office has its end and iſſue in his, which is now to us inſtead of it: and this ſeems to be plainly ſignified in that prophecy, Jer. xxxiii. 18. "Neither ſhall the prieſts the Levites "want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to "kindle meat-offerings, and to do ſacrifice continually." And it is as plainly ſignified in the foregoing verſes with which this is connected, that Chriſt in his throne and kingdom is the antitype of David, and his ſucceſſors in his throne

and kingdom. See ℣ 17. "For thus ſaith the Lord, David "ſhall never want" (or there ſhall never be cut off from David) "a man to ſit upon the throne of the houſe of Iſrael. "Neither ſhall," &c. If we make uſe of the New Teſtament, which is the infallible guide unto the explication of the Old Teſtament prophecies, which are not of any private interpretation, we will find Jeſus Chriſt declared the antitype of the kings as well as of the prieſts.

It is obſerved, that Mount Zion had two tops, one of which bore the temple, and the other the city of David, and David's throne, for that was ſet in Zion. In being come to Jeſus, the Mediator of the new covenant, we are come to both theſe in the antitype, Heb. xii. "Ye are come to Mount "Zion." In that context, the Apoſtle is ſpeaking as much at leaſt of the kingdom of Chriſt as of his prieſthood. Let us but conſider theſe places of the New Teſtament, and we may ſee this truth concerning the kingdom of Chriſt aſſerted, even as that concerning his prieſthood. See the angel's meſſage to his mother, Luke i. 31. 32. 33. "Behold, thou ſhalt conceive "in thy womb, and bring forth a ſon, and ſhalt call his "name Jeſus. He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the Son "of the Higheſt; and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the "throne of his father David. And he ſhall reign over the "houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhall "be no end." [See Gualter on the place.] See the ſong of Zacharias, ℣ 67. 70. "And Zacharias was filled with the "Holy Ghoſt, and propheſied, ſaying, Bleſſed be the Lord "God of Iſrael, for he hath raiſed up a horn of ſalvation "for us in the houſe of his ſervant David; as he ſpake by "the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been ſince the "world began."

See that remarkable confeſſion of the faith by Nathanael, approved by our Lord, John i. 49. 50. "Nathanael an-"ſwered and ſaid unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of "God, thou art the King of Iſrael. Jeſus anſwered and "ſaid unto him, Becauſe I ſaid unto thee, I ſaw thee under "the fig-tree, believeſt thou?"

See the firſt goſpel-ſermon after the Lord's aſcenſion, Acts ii. 30. 31. "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that "God had ſworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of "his loins he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his throne: "he ſeeing this before, ſpake of the reſurrection of Chriſt." And, ℣ 34. 35. 36. "For David is not aſcended into the "heavens: but he himſelf ſaith, The Lord did ſay unto my "Lord,

" Lord, Sit thou at my right hand. Therefore let all the " houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that " ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt."

The glory of the kingdom of David, in the earthly Iſrael, waxed faint, even as did the glory of the temple and prieſthood, and became leſs and leſs ſtill, as the antitype drew nigh; and for the wickedneſs of them that ſat upon that throne, it was overturned, till he came whoſe right it was: ſo that when he came, he was as a branch out of David's roots, according to the prophecies, Ezek. xxi. 25. 26. 27. " And thou profane wicked prince of Iſrael, whoſe day is " come, when iniquity ſhall have an end: Thus ſaith the " Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: " this ſhall not be the ſame; exalt him that is low, and a- " baſe him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, over- " turn it, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right " it is, and I will give it him." And as the Jews were comforted in their dejection, upon the ruins of the firſt temple, and its being no way equalled by the ſecond, by the promiſe of Chriſt to that temple, and of his glorious houſe, the antitype of that temple, Hag. ii.; ſo they were encouraged by all the prophets, under the miſchiefs that befel their kingdom, and the ruins of the houſe of David, with manifold promiſes of the kingdom of Chriſt the antitype. See Amos ix. 8.——12. referred to Acts xv. 16. " After this I will return, " and will build again the tabernacle of David, which " is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, " and I will ſet it up; that the reſidue of men may ſeek af- " ter the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name " is called."

David himſelf might be many ways a type of Chriſt; but it appears that he was a type of Chriſt in reſpect of his throne and kingdom. Now, whatever was peculiar to David, that throne and kingdom was common to him and his ſucceſſors. If, therefore, in that reſpect he was a type of Jeſus Chriſt in his kingdom, as is clear from what is ſaid, his ſucceſſors in that office, whatever they were otherwiſe, muſt, in reſpect of that office, be accounted types of Chriſt in his kingly office. Joſhua the ſon of Joſedeck the high prieſt was, perhaps in more reſpects than one, a type of Chriſt, and ſome things were peculiar to him: but the prieſthood, common to him with others that bore that office, was typical of Chriſt's prieſthood in them, as well as in him. And Zerubbabel's government was as much typical of Chriſt's government, as

Joſhua's

Joſhua's prieſthood was of his prieſthood. There were wicked kings, as we ſee from Ezek. xxi. forecited, and there were wicked prieſts; but the offices were both ſacred, which indeed did aggravate their wickedneſs; but ſo far as they exerciſed their offices with approbation, and acted in theſe offices ſuitably unto the nature and end of them, ſo far they prefigured Chriſt in them.

It is true, theſe offices were diſtinct, ſo that it appertained not to the kings to do the peculiar diſtinguiſhing acts of the prieſtly office; even as the prieſtly and kingly offices, though both lodged in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, are truly diſtinct; and it would be a great abuſe of his kingly office, to put it unto the peculiar uſe of his prieſthood, as we are very ready to do, and it would deſtroy the uſe of both theſe offices unto us, and diſhonour them greatly, whatever honour we may think to put upon one of them thereby, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16.——21. It is alſo true, that the matters of the Lord's immediate worſhip in the temple, were diſtinct from the matters of the king's government in the kingdom; and that the matters of the Lord's worſhip in the temple were ſacred, and the moſt ſacred matters: but the matters of the king were alſo ſacred; the nation or kingdom itſelf where they ruled was ſacred, "a holy nation." The kings that ſat on the throne of David were a light alway before God in Jeruſalem, "the city "which he had choſen him to put his name there," 1 Kings xi. 36. They were church-officers as well as the prophets and prieſts. See Lam. ii. 8. 9. where we ſee Zion's king and her princes, as well as her prophets. And chap. iv. 20. it is ſaid of the king, "The breath of our noſtrils, the anointed of "the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we ſaid, Under "his ſhadow we ſhall live among the Heathen." See likewiſe Ezek. xxii. 26. 27. 28. "Her prieſts have violated my "law, and have profaned my holy things. —— Her princes "in the midſt thereof are like wolves ravening the prey.— "And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mor-"tar." And Micah iii. 10. 11. "They build up Zion with "blood, and Jeruſalem with iniquity. The heads thereof "(*i. e.* of Zion) judge for reward, and the prieſts thereof "teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money." Heads of Zion is a ſtrong expreſſion. See likewiſe Zeph. iii. 2.——5. "She truſted not in the Lord, ſhe drew not near "to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions, her "judges are evening wolves.——Her prophets are light and "treacherous perſons: her prieſts have polluted the ſanc-"tuary,

" tuary, they have done violence to the law. The juſt Lord " is in the midſt thereof, he will not do iniquity." And the following part of that chapter will afford us a view of the difference betwixt this ſtate of things and the New-Teſtament church promiſed there, and of the excellency of that church, with reſpect unto the perſons of whom it doth conſiſt. But by theſe texts cited it appears, that the kings were church-officers, though they were not prieſts, even as were the prophets; and theſe were ſtanding types of Chriſt in that typical church. Chriſt's kingly office is not his prieſtly; but no man would thence infer, that it is not an office in the church: neither would any declare, that the office of deacon in New-Teſtament churches, which reſpects the relief of the poor in their temporal ſtraits, is no church-office, for this reaſon, becauſe it is not the office of biſhop or elder, which more immediately reſpect the matters of the Lord's worſhip. The matters of the Lord and of the king were diſtinct; but the ſame court judged in both, Levites and others being joined in it; and it had diſtinct preſidents for theſe diſtinct matters, but both ſet to judge by the king, who gave them charges and directions, 2 Chron. xix. 8. 9. 10. 11. And not only David and Solomon, who were prophets, but Jehoſhaphat, Hezekiah, and Joſiah, and the good kings, ruled in things pertaining to the temple, and the worſhip of God. Such as contend earneſtly for thoſe kings being only civil officers, will not allow the kings of the earth ſuch power in church-matters now, as the kings of Judah exerciſed with approbation about the temple, and the matters of the Lord's worſhip, if they think conſiſtently with their notions about the intrinſic power of the church; unleſs perhaps they were ſome way ſecured as to this, that the king's power ſhould be at their devotion, and under their direction. After all, it will not be eaſy to ſhew why the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt might not be typified by a worldly kingdom, as well as the heavenly ſanctuary was prefigured by a worldly ſanctuary.

But againſt this it is objected, That whatever power the kings of the houſe of David had in Iſrael, and about the matters of the Lord, ſuch like is attributed to the kings of the earth, with reſpect to the New-Teſtament church; and ſo that was not peculiar to them: nor is Chriſt's government in the church the only thing we have now inſtead of theirs; becauſe it is ſaid, Iſ. xlix. 23. " Kings ſhall be thy nurſing fa-" thers, and their queens thy nurſing mothers."

Becauſe the very letter of this prophecy has been vehement-

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ly urged, as expreſſing fully the ſtrange ſenſe that has been put upon it; and things foreign to the ſcriptures have been built upon theſe words, by men indulging themſelves in private interpretations of the prophecies, without attending to the certain light afforded by the Holy Ghoſt, the author of them, in the New Teſtament, for explaining them; it will be needful particularly to conſider that prophecy, and ſee what light the New Teſtament affords for the explication of it.

And, *firſt*, It is plain there is a great deal of metaphor in that prophecy of which theſe words are a part. For inſtance, (℣ 22.), "The lifting up of the Lord's hand, the ſet-"ting up of his ſtandard to the Gentiles and people, their "bringing Zion's ſons in their arms, and carrying her daugh-"ters upon their ſhoulders." And ℣ 23. "The kings and "queens of the Gentiles bowing down to the church, with "their face towards the earth, and licking up the duſt of "her feet." If there were not much metaphor here, the "whore ſitting on many waters" would bid faireſt for it.

There is not one expreſſion here, then, but what is metaphorical; and that there ſhould be no metaphor in that of "kings nurſing fathers" will not be eaſily granted. For nurſes nouriſh the child: and what is the proper nouriſhment of the church, and of Zion's children? Do the kings of the earth afford that nouriſhment? Do they adminiſter the word and ſacraments? Have they the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven? No; this cannot be the ſenſe. The officers of the church claim this as their privilege, which the New Teſtament gives them, and which the kings of the earth muſt not meddle with. But then, they will beg their own ſenſe of the words: for after this, it is but begging; and it cannot be thought unmerciful, to grant them no more than the New Teſtament gives us leave to grant.

2*dly*, We muſt conſider what is that church unto which this promiſe ſays, "The kings and queens ſhall be nurſing "fathers and mothers." And here we have ſome help from the New Teſtament. See Rev. xxi. 24.——27. "And the "nations of them which are ſaved, ſhall walk in the light of "it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and "honour into it. And the gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at "all by day: for there ſhall be no night there. And they "ſhall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. "And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that de-"fileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh

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" a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of " life."

Theſe words ſeem to declare the full accompliſhment of this promiſe, and of all the Old Teſtament promiſes of this kind: for they contain a deſcription of the church in its perfection, at " the reſtitution of all things;" and a further declaration of the ſame thing that is declared Rev. xi. 15. where it is ſaid, " The kingdoms of this world are become the " kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall " reign for ever and ever."

This is a part of the ſhort ſum which that context gives of the iſſue of the voice of the ſeventh angel; of which voice it was ſaid, chap. x. 7. " But in the days of the voice of the " ſeventh angel, when he ſhall ſound, the myſtery of God " ſhall be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his ſervants the " prophets."

Now, the voice of this ſeventh angel iſſues in the kingdoms of this world their becoming the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, where he is to reign for ever and ever; the coming of God's wrath, the raiſing of the dead, the rewarding of the prophets, ſaints, and them that fear God, both ſmall and great, and the deſtruction of them that deſtroy the earth, Rev. xi. 15.——18.

This is the ſum of the things more fully declared from chap. xiv. to the end of the book. And for a more full declaration of that 15th verſe of chap. xi. we have what is ſaid in the end of chap. xxi. which repreſents the glorious ſtate of the church after Chriſt's ſecond coming, when he hath put down all rule, and authority, and power: " And when the " fulneſs of the elect of all nations is brought into the " church." And what church is that there ſpoken of? Surely no other but that which conſiſts of all them, and in no wiſe of any other but them that are ſaved, and are written in the Lamb's book of life: for where it is ſaid, " The glory " and honour of the nations ſhall be brought unto it," it is alſo ſaid, " There ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that " defileth."

Of this holy catholic church, and not ſo much of any particular church, does this Old-Teſtament promiſe ſpeak, as is evident from the context.

Now, let it be declared, in what ſenſe kings are nurſing fathers to this church. Do they beſtow worldly privileges upon it? and have they any other to beſtow? Do they ſave and defend this Mount Zion from its enemies by their power?

and is all their power ſufficient for this taſk? Are they to look upon this church as a father does on a child nurſed by him? And is this church to regard the kings of the earth as a child regards its nurſing father? They that would have it thought, from theſe words, that the kings of the earth are nurſing fathers to the church, as they are to the nations where they rule, muſt find ſome difficulty in reconciling this with the following words, "They ſhall bow down to thee "with their faces towards the earth, and lick up the duſt of "thy feet."

3*dly*, It is eaſy to underſtand, how kings are nurſing fathers to the nations where they rule, and to their ſubjects in thoſe nations: and as it is the duty of their ſubjects to regard them as their nurſing fathers, ſo it is their duty to behave toward their ſubjects ſuitably to this deſignation, and particularly to protect them in their natural and civil rights, of which the liberty of their conſciences ought to be looked upon as a very valuable one. And if the kings of the earth had but maintained this, there had never been ſuch a thing ſeen in the world, as the "whore ſitting on the beaſt, drunk "with the blood of the ſaints."

But it is not ſo eaſily underſtood, how kings and queens, in that capacity, are nurſes unto any but their ſubjects; and that as they are their ſubjects, and as of the nations and kingdoms where they rule. If theſe nations be churches, the king of the nation is king of the church, and ſo nurſes the church. But this promiſe ſpeaks of the holy catholic church, and not of a national church; and the New Teſtament ſpeaks nothing of a national church: ſo that there is no ſuch thing inſtituted by Chriſt, to be nurſed by any king or queen; and therefore this cannot be the ſenſe of the promiſe, that the kings and queens of the nations ſhall nurſe national churches.

Neither is there any encouragement given in the New Teſtament unto that way wherein ſome would have the kings to be the church's nurſing fathers. For they think, the kings ſhould nurſe the church, by providing abundant maintenance for the clergy, and ſo making it needleſs for all them that are taught in the word to give obedience to Chriſt, commanding them to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; and further, by ſupporting their authority over the people, and employing the kingly power againſt all them that ſubmit not to it; and by beſtowing worldly privileges upon the church, and defending her in the poſſeſſion of theſe: thus making a worldly

worldly kingdom for Chriſt and his miniſters, like the lords of the Gentiles. But, eſpecially, the kings muſt nurſe the church, by defending her from the arguments of ſuch teachers as the dignified clergy judge heretics or ſchiſmatics, and by their authority pronounce them ſuch, while they either cannot ſtop their mouths by convincing arguments, or will not be at pains to do it; and the king is to defend the church from ſuch falſe teachers, by cutting them off, or ſome way effectually reſtraining them from ſpeaking. Yet heretical teaching (however evil it be before God and his church, and however Chriſtians, in a private capacity, may ſhew their abhorrence of it, without diſturbing civil ſociety) is none of thoſe evil deeds that the New Teſtament ſubjects to the wrath and puniſhment inflicted by the magiſtrate: for theſe are open immoralities, and breaches of the ſecond table of the law; as is very evident from Rom. xiii. which ſpeaks only of the ſecond table; and from 1 Pet. ii. 12.——16. It is not eaſily to be believed, that the church of Chriſt is nurſed by the very ſame means whereby the antichriſtian church is nurſed, and by which more of Zion's children have been ſufferers than of heretics or falſe teachers. Our Lord, foreſeeing hereſies and heretics would go along with his goſpel, and the pure profeſſion of it in the world, and that many of his faithful ſervants would be cut off out of the world, under pretence of cutting off heretics and ſchiſmatics, has given in this caution againſt it, in the parable of the tares and wheat, Matth. xiii. "Let both grow together until the "harveſt, leſt while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the "wheat with them."

4thly, It muſt be noticed, that theſe words, Iſ. xlix. 23. come as an anſwer to that queſtion, ℣ 21. (which follows promiſes of a numerous church upon the rejection of the Jews, ℣ 19. 20.), "Then ſhalt thou ſay in thine heart, Who "hath begotten me theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my children, "and am deſolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? "and who hath brought up theſe? Behold, I was left alone, "theſe, where had they been?"

If the Jews ſhould be caſt off, it is ſuppoſed to be matter of wonder, whence Zion ſhould have ſo many children as the 19th and 20th verſes import; and the New Teſtament declares what difficulty there was about this, and how aſtoniſhing it was when it came to paſs: therefore there is a queſtion about it in the prophecy, as a myſterious thing, puzzling to the minds of men. So that the ſcope of the pro-

phecy is the increaſe of the church, by the calling of the Gentiles, when the children of the Jeruſalem that was on earth are caſt out, and the bringing of the elect of all nations unto Chriſt, and into that new Jeruſalem which is above, and is the mother of them all. This prophecy ſpeaks not of the defence and protection of any church by the powers of the earth, nor of their beſtowing worldly privileges upon it; but it ſpeaks clearly of the erection and increaſe of that church which is the glorious antitype of the church of Iſrael; and it muſt be explained according to this ſcope. The New Teſtament gives us abundant direction in this, and ſhews how this promiſe began to be fulfilled in the days of the apoſtles, but ſignifies no other accompliſhment of it to the end of the world. And if we compare 2 Cor. vi. 1. 2. with the 8th verſe of this chapter, which is wholly a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, we will ſee that we are to ſeek the beginning of the accompliſhment of this whole prophecy in the time of the apoſtles.

Laſtly, Therefore this promiſe contains not a deſcription of any office that the kings of the earth are to exerciſe about the church; but it is a deſcription of thoſe of whom the church ſhould conſiſt upon the caſting out of the Jews: for when inquiry is made by Zion, "Who hath begotten me "theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my children?" the Lord anſwers, "I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and they ſhall "bring thy ſons in their arms." And whereas it is inquired, "Who brought up theſe? Behold, I was left alone, theſe, "where had they been?" or, What are they? and whence came they? the Lord anſwers, "The kings of the Gen-"tiles ſhall be thy nurſing fathers, and their queens thy nur-"ſing mothers:" They brought up theſe, they were nurſed by them, as their ſubjects. And thus the kingdoms of the world, where, of old, there were no children of Zion, are now as ſo many nurſeries, from whence Zion's children are brought to her. The kings of the earth nurſe their ſubjects, and Zion has many children of them who are nurſed by the kings of the earth, that is, their ſubjects. Thus the anſwer is ſuited unto the queſtion; and it is no other but a metaphorical deſcription of the calling of the Gentiles, which began in the days of the apoſtles, to continue through the whole accepted time, the whole day of ſalvation, till the Lord's ſecond coming, when it ſhall be ſaid, "The king-"doms of this world are become the kingdoms of our "Lord,

" Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and " ever."

As to what is ſaid in the latter part of the verſe, " of the " king's bowing down to the church, and licking up the duſt " of her feet;" we know that the Lord Chriſt has power over all fleſh, that he might give eternal life to his people; and that he is exalted far above all power in this world, and that which is to come, and is " head over all things to the " church," making all things, even the greateſt enemies of the church, work together for its good, in a way of holy providence, while he rules in the midſt of his enemies, till, at length, when he comes the ſecond time, he put down all rule, and authority, and power, and all his enemies under the feet of the church.

So that it cannot eaſily be made evident from this, yea, nor from any other text of the Old or New Teſtament, that the kings of the nations may be unto the New-Teſtament church, Mount Zion, the heavenly Jeruſalem, or to the dwelling-place and aſſemblies of this Mount Zion, goſpel-churches, inſtead of the kings of the houſe of David, or that they ſhall have the ſame power there that they had in that earthly nation and kingdom which was then the church of God.

Yet neither was it only the government of the kings of David's houſe in that nation that was typical of the kingdom of Chriſt: for the government of Chriſt in his kingdom is the antitype of all the rule and goverment in that nation, under its ſeveral forms of government, from the time of its being a nation, even as he is alſo the antitype of all the firſt-born in the family-ſtate of the church before that.

For that people became a nation by virtue of a divine promiſe, and its becoming a nation was the accompliſhment of a promiſe propoſed to the faith of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; and this promiſe was ſubſervient to the great promiſe of the ſeed Chriſt, for the ſake of which it was given, as may be afterward more fully declared. And when the houſe of Jacob did become a nation, it was unto God a holy nation, a kingdom of prieſts, Exod. xix. 5. 6. That nation was his people ſeparated from all the people upon the face of the earth, Exod. xxxiii. 13. 16.

The whole ruling power in this nation was firſt in the hands of Moſes, and his government was eccleſiaſtic. When the government was too great a burden for him alone, and the ſeventy elders were firſt ſet apart to bear the burden with him, and to judge in that commonwealth of Iſrael, they partook

took of the ſpirit that was upon Moſes for that purpoſe, Numb. xi.

This nation, in all its forms of government, was a theocracy. God was the very King of the nation; and therefore he was offended with his people for deſiring a king like the reſt of the nations. And though he allowed them a king, as he had given directions about this before, Deut. xvii. from ℣ 14. to the end; yet that king was to be of his chuſing, and the manner of the kingdom was declared by him, 1 Sam. viii. ix. & x. The King was to be under his expreſs command and direction in the matters of government, and of war and peace. So that they were not kings like the kings of the nations: for the Lord remained ſtill the King of that nation, and the government of it was his; ſo it was a ſacred thing.

The judges that the Lord raiſed up to judge Iſrael were plainly ſacred rulers, and types of the Chriſt; and the Lord refers to them, when he makes the promiſe to David of building him an houſe, and of the Meſſiah's kingdom, 1 Chron. xvii. 6.—11.

There were ſeveral occaſional types of the Meſſiah's kingdom and government, and ſeveral inſtances and acts of temporal rule and government ſome way relating to Iſrael, and ſeveral temporal rulers that prefigured Chriſt's kingdom, as Joſeph, Mordecai, Eſth. x. and Cyrus, Iſ. xliv. & xlv. and the like. But the rule and government in Iſrael, the church of God, was a ſtanding type and conſtant prefiguration of the kingdom of Chriſt. It was for his ſake that Iſrael became a nation and kingdom; and when it was determined clearly in David's promiſe, that he ſhould ſpring of Judah, and David's kingdom was ſet up in Judah, (1 Chron. xxviii. 4. 5.), as an eſpecial type of the Meſſiah to come of his houſe, the reſt of the tribes were ſuffered to apoſtatiſe from the covenant at Sinai; and that apoſtate kingdom, if it was typical of any thing, it was rather antichriſt: but the whole government in Judah prefigured the Meſſiah, our Judge, Lawgiver, and King, Iſ. xxxiii. 22. There was an eſpecial preſence of God therefore among thoſe rulers beyond other rulers; and Jehoſhaphat, when ſetting judges in the land, tells them, "Ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is "with you in the judgment:" He ſtood in their congregation, and judged among them.

Something to this purpoſe ſeems to be intended in Pſal. lxxxii. It is agreed, that magiſtrates and rulers are there ſpoke

ſpoke of, and called "gods" and "ſons of the Higheſt." But it is not of all rulers that this is ſpoken; for they are plainly diſtinguiſhed from other princes, and called gods on that account wherein they are diſtinguiſhed from them. Yea, it is manifeſt, that they are the rulers in God's nation: for they were rulers, as our Lord tells us, "to whom the word of "God came," John x. 35. And ſuch were only the rulers in Jacob: "God did not make known his ſtatutes, and the "doctrine of his word, to other nations." Or if we may underſtand "the Word" that our Lord ſays came to them, or was with them, the ſame way as John i. 1.; that is, if we take it for the Son of God himſelf, whoſe name is the Word of God; then we may explain the firſt verſe of that Pſalm of him, and his preſence among the rulers of God's nation: "God ſtandeth in the congregation of the mighty, he judgeth "among the gods. If he called them gods unto whom "the word of God came." (πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐγένετο·) [See Biſterfield upon the place againſt Crellius]. The duties of their office are pointed out to them, and theſe are the ſame wherein Solomon is made a type of the Meſſiah. Pſal. lxxii. 12. 13. 14. And they are complained of as not underſtanding their great office, nor ſuitably exerciſing it, but acting contrary to the deſign of it; ſo that the church was in a lamentable condition under their government, ℣ 2.—5. Then the Pſalmiſt concludes thus concerning them, ℣ 6. & 7. "I "ſaid, Ye are gods, and all of you ſons of the Higheſt. But "ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." After this great account of their office, beyond that of other princes, and grievous complaint of their wickedneſs, and of their weakneſs and infirmity as dying men, whoſe eminence ended with their life, he cries out in the laſt verſe, "Ariſe, "O God, judge the earth; for thou ſhalt inherit all nations." This is he from whom theſe rulers had the deſignation "gods," and "ſons of the Higheſt," even the Meſſiah, the Son of God, who is indeed the true God. It was their excellency above other princes, that they were rulers in God's nation, and that in this their office they were types of him who is indeed God; and thus they are called gods in a way very agreeable to ſcripture; and this that is ſaid of the types is abundantly verified in the antitype, ſo the ſcripture is not broken. The Pſalmiſt, complaining of the types, cries for the glorious antitype; even as, Jer. xxiii. and Ezek. xxxvi. the types are complained of, and Chriſt, the antitype, promiſed. Theſe rulers were called gods, yet they were

were but mere men; and he deſires that he ſhould take the kingdom who is God in reality, from whom they borrowed that name, and in whom that deſignation of theirs is verified. They judged unjuſtly and weakly, like men; but righteous judgment is expected from him: they were dying men, and their government ended with their life; but the Meſſiah, the Son of God, ariſes from the dead, and takes the kingdom: their government was in that nation; but his kingdom extends to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: "Ariſe, "O God, judge the earth; for thou ſhalt inherit all nations."

In this view of that Pſalm, we perceive our Lord's reference to it, John x. 32.—36. carries in it a ſtrong argument for his Godhead, and what is ordinarily pleaded againſt it from that place is entirely taken off.

CHAP. II.

Of the diſtinction between the Old Teſtament and the New with reſpect unto the church, and of the nature of the kingdom of Chriſt.

WE have been conſidering ſome things imported in our Lord's confeſſion, that he is the King promiſed to the Jews. We ſhall next ſee what he ſays of his kingdom. And here he gives us a ſhort ſum of his doctrine concerning his kingdom; and delivers it ſo as at once to point againſt the Jewiſh miſtake, and to ſatisfy Pilate, that he was falſely accuſed of being againſt Cæſar.

"My kingdom," ſays he, "is not of this world.—Now "is my kingdom not from hence."

Both John Baptiſt, his forerunner, and he himſelf, preaching of his kingdom, deſigned it *the kingdom of heaven*. Thus they ſtripped the prophecies of the vail of ſimilitudes, taken from that worldly kingdom of God in Iſrael, which was an earthly prefiguration of this heavenly thing. So they explained the prophecies. And this their explication of them had a foundation in the prophecies themſelves. For in theſe ſuch things are ſaid of this kingdom, as could neither agree to that old kingdom of Iſrael, nor to any kingdom of this world: for this was the promiſe to David: "When thy "days be fulfilled, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy fathers, I "will ſet up thy ſeed after thee.—And I will eſtabliſh the "throne of his kingdom for ever.—And thine houſe, and "thy

" thy kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever before thee. Thy " throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever." It could not be eſtabliſhed before David in this world after his days in it were fulfilled; but after David is no more in this world, it is promiſed that his kingdom, and the throne of his ſon, ſhall be eſtabliſhed before him; and in this David profeſſes his full ſatisfaction, when leaving this world. This kingdom muſt therefore be of another world, where David is, and where the King reigns for ever glorioufly " before his ancients" that have their days on earth fulfilled, Iſ. xxiv. 23. and not of this world. David himſelf ſays, in ſpirit, that his " Lord ſhould ſit," ruling, on the right hand of God, Pſal. cx. 1. compare Pſal. xlvii. and lxviii. 18. and ciii. 19.—22. A kingdom that hath its king ſitting on his throne in the heavens, and reigning before his ancients that are in heaven; a kingdom that is eſtabliſhed for ever, and of which there ſhall be no end, is neither the old kingdom of Iſrael that was on earth, and is done away, nor any kingdom of this world; but muſt be of another world, and the kingdom of heaven. It is only in this heavenly kingdom that what is ſaid of the eternity of the Old-Teſtament church, the type of it, is verified: for if it were of this world, or from hence, it could not be eternal; but now is David's throne and kingdom not of this world, now it is not from hence. Conſider Pſal. lxxxix 35.— 2.

This *now* ſuppoſes another ſtate of things before, with reſpect to what is here ſpoke of; and imports, that what is here ſaid of this kingdom was not before, but is now to take place. This that our Lord ſays of his kingdom, is oppoſed unto the kingdom of God, as it had been before this in the nation of Iſrael. That was a worldly kingdom, until he came, and put an end to that ſtate of things by his death, wherein he alſo laid the foundation of this his kingdom, which is not of this world. This preſent time wherein he ſpeaks before Pilate, is that time when this change was a-making, and immediately to be done in his death, ſetting aſide the old covenant or teſtament, whereby that worldly kingdom was erected, and ſealing the new covenant or teſtament, whereby the kingdom of heaven is erected and eſtabliſhed for ever.

SECT. I.

FOR clearing the diſtinction between the New Teſtament and the Old, as to this point, and eſtabliſhing what is now ſaid, in order to make way for a view of this kingdom

of Jeſus Chriſt, it will be neceſſary that we conſider God's promiſe and covenants from the fall of man.

The firſt intimation of Chriſt and the covenant of grace that was made to ſinners, is owned by Chriſtians to be in that word of the Lord, Gen. iii. 15. "And I will put enmity "between thee and the woman, and between thy ſeed and "her ſeed: it ſhall bruiſe thy head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his "heel." There the whole revelation of this covenant of grace was, as it were, in embryo, to be afterward extended; and this light ſhining in a dark place guided them that were ſaved by the faith of Chriſt for ſeveral ages. Under the influence of this light, Abel worſhipped God, in the faith of Chriſt, the promiſed ſeed, and obtained witneſs that he was righteous; and Enoch walked with God, and pleaſed him, Heb. xi 4. 5. When this promiſe was given out, ſacrifices were appointed; as appears from Abel's ſacrificing in faith, and being accepted in it: and it is very likely, that the beaſts of whoſe ſkins the Lord made coats to cover the nakedneſs of our firſt parents, were the firſt ſacrifices; and that therein was a figure of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt covering our nakedneſs before God, Rom iv. 6. 7. xiii. 14. Rev. iii. 17. 18. Thus the worſhip of God among ſinful men, and their acceptance therein, took its riſe from that promiſe of Chriſt: and the true worſhip of God was never without ſacrifice ſince the fall of man; nor were there wanting, from that time, types of Chriſt, and of good things to come by him.

In that firſt promiſe, it is remarkable, that the Lord, laying the whole of the recovery and ſalvation of loſt ſinners upon his own ſovereign will, and not upon the will of man, declares it is his will, to eſtabliſh a diviſion in the earth, by reconciling ſome unto himſelf in Chriſt, the promiſed ſeed, their head, and ſo ſetting them at odds with Satan, and the reſt of mankind, his ſeed, to be conquered by the ſufferings of the ſeed of the woman. It ſeems alſo to have been his mind, in that promiſe, that this diviſion and controverſy ſhould be one way or other viſible in the world. So it appeared very early in the caſe of Cain and Abel; and, leſt the controverſy ſhould fail upon Abel's death, the Lord raiſed up another ſon to Adam in the room of Abel, whom Cain ſlew, Gen. iv. 25.; ſo that it was kept up ſome way between the poſterity of Seth, and the apoſtate race of Cain, till ſuch time as the poſterity of Seth, except Noah, mingled themſelves

ſelves with Cain's race, and joined with them in their apoſtaſy and wickedneſs.

This was the cauſe of the flood; from which Noah and his family were preſerved in the ark; which was another figure of ſalvation by Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the church; and God's covenant with Noah, and every living thing, having the rainbow for the ſign of it, was ſubſervient unto God's deſign of grace revealed in the promiſe. There ſeems alſo to be ſomething of the goſpel in that ſaying of Noah, Gen. ix. 26. 27. "Bleſſed be the Lord God of Shem," &c. "God ſhall enlarge Japhet, and he ſhall dwell in the tents "of Shem." Something is here intimated of Iſrael, the poſterity of Shem, their being the church and people of God, and of the promiſed ſeed his coming of Shem; and then of the Gentiles their becoming fellow-heirs with the Jews, and partakers of the promiſe in Chriſt by the goſpel.

But, leſt the controverſy that the Lord had eſtabliſhed in the earth ſhould fail, when the world of the ungodly are thus deſtroyed, Ham is preſerved in the ark, and ſo it broke out again in Noah's family. After ſome time the poſterity of Japhet, and perhaps many of the ſeed of Shem, joined with the curſed apoſtate race of Ham, in that matter of building the tower. That which they propoſed was a firm union among themſelves, and greatneſs in the earth, a great name. Thus, as the race of Seth mingled themſelves with Cain's ſeed, to fulfill the luſt of the fleſh, or ſenſuality; ſo the poſterity of Shem and Japhet joined themſelves with the race of Ham, to fulfill the pride of life, to make themſelves great and famous in the earth. And this union alſo diſpleaſed the Lord, ſo that he gives it as the reaſon of his confounding their language, Gen. xi. 4. 6. "Behold, the peo-"ple is one."

This confounding their language was a dreadful judgment upon that generation; for, as it utterly diſappointed their worldly deſigns, ſo it put an effectual ſtop to the continuance and propagation of the knowledge of the true God, and the promiſed ſeed among them: and from that time God ſuffered their poſterity, the nations, to walk in their own ways; they became vain in their imaginations, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images made like to corruptible things, and worſhipped the creature. This became ſoon ſo univerſal, that, when God called Abraham, he was ſerving other gods, Joſ. xxiv. 2. Thus God ſtraitened them by the confounding of their language, and ſtraitened Japhet

not to be enlarged till the time of giving the gift of languages. But the Lord would not thus ſuffer the controverſy that he had eſtabliſhed by his promiſe utterly to fail in the earth; ſo he called Abraham, of the ſeed of Shem, and gave him the promiſe of Chriſt, and ſeparated him, and his ſeed Iſaac and Jacob, and the children of Iſrael, from the nations, till Chriſt the promiſed ſeed ſhould come of him.

We muſt carefully conſider the promiſe made to Abraham: for now the revelation of Chriſt the ſeed became more clear, and the diſtinction betwixt the Old Teſtament and the New, muſt be underſtood in a great meaſure by the due underſtanding of this.

It muſt be agreed among Chriſtians, that own the authority of the New Teſtament, that Chriſt is that ſeed promiſed to Abraham, "in whom all the nations of the earth ſhould be "bleſſed," Gen. xii. 3. and xxii. 18. compare Gal. iii. 16. So that here the goſpel is preached before unto Abraham, Gal. iii 8. By the nations in this promiſe we cannot underſtand all and every one in the nations; nor can we conſider them as ſuch political bodies of men in the earth; but, according to the New-Teſtament explication, "It is a great multi-"tude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," Rev. vii. 9. and v. 9. For otherwiſe, if that promiſe ſhould be accompliſhed before the coming of Chriſt, there would be an end of all viſible controverſy between the ſeed of the woman and of the ſerpent; which we have ground to think cannot be. See Luke xii. 49.—53. John xvii. 20. 21. Matth. xxiv. and xvi. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 12. The apoſtles ſhew plainly, that this promiſe to Abraham had the beginning of its accompliſhment in their day, and that to a wonder; and yet there was then no whole nation, nor any one nation, in a national capacity, bleſſed in Chriſt. But this will be evident, if we conſider, that the bleſſedneſs ſpoken of in this promiſe is ſpiritual and eternal, and muſt be acknowledged ſo to be by them that take the New-Teſtament account of it, Gal. iii. 8. 9. 14. "And the ſcripture fore-"ſeeing, that God would juſtify the Heathen through faith, "preached before the goſpel unto Abraham, ſaying, In thee "ſhall all nations be bleſſed. So then they which be of faith, "are bleſſed with faithful Abraham.—That the bleſſing of "Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt; "that we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit through "faith." It is manifeſt, no nation of this world can, in a national capacity, be the ſubject of juſtification by faith; and

and of the promiſe of the Spirit, which we receive through faith; and it is as certain, that every perſon in the nations of the world is not to partake of this bleſſedneſs. What remains, therefore, but that it ſhould be thoſe who are redeemed by Chriſt out of every nation? And thus we find out the intent of the writings of the prophets about the nations: for theſe are enlargements upon this promiſe to Abraham.

Thus far, then, God's promiſe to Abraham was ſpiritual and eternal. And here lay the object of that faith whereby Abraham was juſtified, and eternally ſaved; even as his ſpiritual ſeed of all nations are bleſſed with him, in the faith of the ſame thing, that was then to be found in the promiſe, but now in the accompliſhment of that promiſe, as is declared in the goſpel.

Yet there was ſomething in this promiſe peculiar to Abraham, and not common to him with all believers; and that was, that Chriſt ſhould come of his ſeed, Gal iii 16. Heb. ii. 16. That this might be evidently fulfilled, it was neceſſary that Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh, of whom Chriſt was to come, ſhould be preſerved diſtinct from other people, till the promiſed ſeed, Chriſt, ſhould come of them. And of this that was peculiar to Abraham in the promiſe of Chriſt, there came another promiſe, which we may ſee Gen. xii. 2. 7. "I will make of thee a great nation.—— "Unto thy ſeed will I give this land." See likewiſe Gen. xiii. 14. 15. and Gen. xv. from ℣ 13. It is evident this promiſe was temporal, as the other is ſpiritual and eternal, and fell to be accompliſhed before that other. And this temporal promiſe was given as a pledge of the accompliſhment of the eternal promiſe, and carried in it a type, or earthly pattern, of the heavenly things of that promiſe. For the land of Canaan, promiſed as an inheritance to his ſeed according to the fleſh, was a type of the heavenly inheritance: and ſo Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, took it to be, Heb. xi. 8. 9. 10. 14. 15. 16. And the ſeed of Abraham according to the fleſh, that became a nation, and inherited Canaan's land, is evidently a type of Abraham's ſpiritual ſeed of all nations, the heavenly nation, that inherits the heavenly country. And the difference betwixt theſe two was typified by Iſhmael, the ſon of the bond woman, and Iſaac, the ſon of the free woman, in Abraham's family, Gal. iv. 21.——31.

This twofold promiſe laid the foundation of a twofold relation to God; the one ſpiritual and eternal, betwixt God and them that believed the ſpiritual promiſe, and all the children

dren of Abraham according to the ſpirit, in all the nations of the earth; the other earthly and temporal, betwixt God and the ſeed of Abraham according to the fleſh; which it behoved ſo far to continue till Chriſt came, as the end deſigned by it required. Of both theſe God ſpeaks to Abraham, Gen. xvii. when he gives him the covenant of circumciſion, to be kept by him, and his ſeed after him, in their generations. This circumciſion was a ſign of Chriſt's being to come of Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh; and it repreſented the ſhedding the blood of that promiſed ſeed, and the putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, and was a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith to them that believed in the ſeed to come: ſo that, by the nature of it, it fell to be done away by the coming of that promiſed ſeed: and therefore it belonged to the temporal promiſe, and the temporal relation betwixt God and Abraham's ſeed according to the fleſh, as that promiſe and relation was ſubſervient, and had a reference unto the eternal promiſe, and the relation ariſing therefrom. And thus God made the covenant of circumciſion with Abraham, to be a God unto him, and to his ſeed after him, in their generations (Gen. xvii. 7. — 11. *&c.*); by this means ſeparating Abraham and his ſeed, that were to be a nation, and inherit Canaan, to be a peculiar people to him above all people, and incloſing the promiſe of Chriſt among this circumciſed people, till that promiſed ſeed ſhould come.

But hitherto Abraham's twofold promiſe was not accompliſhed: therefore when God gave him the covenant of circumciſion, he made himſelf known to him only by the name of *God Almighty*, able to accompliſh all that he had promiſed. Abraham's faith was exerciſed with many ſeeming impoſſibilities ſtanding in the way of the accompliſhment of both the promiſes; yet it was victorious; and he became therein a noble pattern to all that ſhould believe; and "died "in faith, not having received the promiſes," as did alſo Iſaac and Jacob after him; the temporal promiſe not being yet fulfilled; and it behoved it to be fulfilled before that which is ſpiritual and eternal.

Now, when the Lord proceeded to fulfill the temporal promiſe made to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, to make their ſeed a nation, and give them the promiſed land, he did it by means of a covenant, even that which he made with them "when he took them by the hand, to bring them out of the "land of Egypt," by the mediation of Moſes, Exod. xix. 3.—8. This is called the *old covenant*, Heb. viii. on account

count of the temporal relation between the Lord and that nation, which is done away. It is alſo called the *law*, Gal. iii. 17. Heb. x. 1. becauſe of the law therein given to the nation of Iſrael; and the *firſt teſtament*, Heb. ix. 15. on account of the typical adoption, and the temporal inheritance, which was firſt given before the promiſe of the eternal inheritance was fulfilled. And when he proceeded, in the fulneſs of time, to fulfill that great ſpiritual and eternal promiſe, of bleſſing all nations in Chriſt, he does it by means of another covenant, even that which he makes by the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt with Abraham's ſpiritual ſeed of all nations, redeemed from ſpiritual bondage and the wrath to come, by the blood of the Lamb, the truly holy and heavenly nation. This is called the *new covenant*, Heb. viii. becauſe of the new ſpiritual and eternal relation betwixt God and this new nation, made up of all the nations of the earth; which could not be, without making old that covenant whereby he ſtood peculiarly related to one nation, and whereby the uncircumciſed nations "were without God in the "world," Eph. ii. from ℣ 13. And it is called the *new teſtament*, on account of the true adoption, Gal. iv. 1.—7. and the eternal inheritance therein given to as many of all nations as the Lord calls, now when the firſt inheritance is done away, Heb. ix. 15. This is the better covenant; as much better, as the ſure promiſes of ſpiritual and eternal bleſſedneſs to all nations in heavenly places in Chriſt, upon which it is eſtabliſhed, are better than the promiſes of temporal bleſſings in earthly places to the nation of Iſrael, upon which that firſt covenant was eſtabliſhed; as much better, as the whole people within the bond of this covenant, whoſe ſins God remembers no more, who all of them know him, and in whoſe hearts his law is written, that they may never depart from him, are better than that covenanted nation, which continued not in that ſame covenant whereby it was related to God, and was caſt off by him; and as much better, as the blood of the Son of God ſealing this covenant, is better than the blood of beaſts dedicating the firſt, and as his mediation is better than the mediation of Moſes. And theſe are the two covenants or teſtaments of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, Gal iv. Heb. viii. and ix.

Our divines are very ſhy to uſe the ſcripture-expreſſion in this caſe, and ſhun to call them two covenants, but think they expreſs the thing better, when they call them two diſpenſations of the covenant of grace. And they take this way

way to eſtabliſh this great truth, That none were ſaved ſince the fall but through Chriſt, by faith in him. Their deſign is good; but why ſhould they ſhun to uſe the ſcripture-language, and think they expreſs the thing better than the Spirit of God, who knew beſt the fitteſt words, and thereby reflect on him, as if his words were not fit for the purpoſe? Yet his words have a plain ſenſe, and are better fitted to the purpoſe than thoſe they have put in the place of them. He calls them *two covenants*; and ſo they are indeed, as much diſtinct as heaven and earth are; and ſhews plainly, that all the covenanted in that firſt covenant were not ſaved, yea that none were ſaved but by faith in the promiſes of Chriſt, upon which the new covenant is eſtabliſhed. Thus all the ſaints from Adam to Chriſt obtained eternal life, and never one of them was ſaved by that national covenant with Iſrael, which is done away; though, having a ſhadow of good things to come, it was ſubſervient to the promiſe of Chriſt, and to the faith of that promiſe, and was a ſchoolmaſter to bring them to Chriſt, that they might be juſtified by faith.

SECT. II.

THat we may have ſome further view of theſe two covenants, with the different ſtates of things eſtabliſhed by them, and of the kingdom of Chriſt eſtabliſhed by the new covenant, we may conſider Heb. xii. from ℣ 18. to the end; where we have a ſhort account of the difference betwixt the covenant at Sinai and the new covenant, the different ſtates of things under them, the excellency of the new, and the ſtate of things eſtabliſhed thereby; the doing away of that covenant, with what pertained to it; the remaining of the things pertaining to the new covenant; and the concluſion of all is, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot "be moved," *&c.* which is the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, of which we ſpeak.

The Apoſtle is upon an exhortation to holineſs: and whereas the Jews objected againſt the New-Teſtament way of it, that it made void the law, and encouraged men in ſin; he pleads ſtrongly for holineſs, 1. From the grace of the new covenant bringing us near to God, in oppoſition to the terrible voice of the law, injecting ſlaviſh fear, and keeping ſinners at a diſtance. 2. From the glorious holy ſociety eſtabliſhed by the new covenant, into which we are brought by

by the voice of the new covenant, in oppoſition to the voice of Sinai, erecting an earthly nation. 3. From the greater majeſty and glory of the voice of the new covenant, which is from heaven, than of that voice which ſpake on earth. And, 4. From the greater vengeance upon them that turn away from this voice ſpeaking from heaven; vengeance from heaven being more dreadful than vengeance from earth. Other things might be noticed here to this purpoſe; but I ſhall confine myſelf to my preſent ſcope.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks here of the two covenants, calls them both a *voice*; and both that covenant, and this that we have now, are the voice of God. Yea, that voice at Sinai was the voice of the ſame perſon who is the Mediator of the new covenant: for he appeared on Sinai, and gave the law, by the diſpoſition of angels, and the miniſtry of Moſes, the typical mediator, and entered into that covenant with his typical people, whom he redeemed with a typical redemption out of Egypt; ſo that he is the God of Iſrael. He ſpeaks now in a more condeſcending manner, not keeping ſinners at ſuch a diſtance, being incarnate; and his voice now is the "voice "of his blood, which ſpeaketh better things than that of "Abel;" but ſtill he is the ſame perſon that ſpake of old. And it is to be obſerved, that his voice then "ſhook the "earth," but now he himſelf is notably at work, as Mediator of the new covenant, "ſhaking not the earth only, but "alſo heaven."

Obſerve how the Apoſtle diſtinguiſhes theſe two ſpeakings of his, or his voice in the old covenant and in the new. 1. As to the time of them: *then*, at Sinai, when he brought the children of Iſrael out of Egypt; and *now*, in the day of the goſpel. 2. He diſtinguiſhes them by the place of ſpeaking: "Then he ſpake on earth, from the top of the mount that "might be touched," after he had redeemed that people out of Egypt; but now he ſpeaketh "from heaven, from mount "Zion, the heavenly Jeruſalem," having finiſhed his work of redemption upon the earth. 3. He diſtinguiſhes them by the effects of them: "His voice then ſhook the earth: but "now he hath promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more I ſhake not "the earth only, but alſo heaven. And this word, *Yet once* "*more*, ſignifieth the removing of thoſe things that are ſha-"ken, as of things that are made, that thoſe things which "cannot be ſhaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving "a kingdom," *&c.*

There was a great earthquake at Sinai when the firſt cove-

nant was made; but, by the ſtrain of the text, it appears, that this ſhaking of the earth was ſignificant of a notable alteration of the ſtate of things with reſpect unto the church then; even as the earthquake, and rending of the vail of the temple, was ſignificant of a notable alteration of the ſtate of things about the church. I ſhall lay forth what I take to be the Apoſtle's ſcope, in the following obſervations.

Obſ. 1. "There was a notable alteration and change of "things with reſpect to the church on earth, by the Lord's "voice in the covenant with Iſrael at Sinai."

What this change and alteration was, we may ſee in the following inſtances.

1. Then was the Lord accompliſhing the promiſe made to the patriarchs, that was firſt to be accompliſhed before the promiſe of the ſeed in whom all the nations ſhould be bleſſed, Gen. xii. 1. 2. 6. 7. and xiii. 14. 15. and xv. *&c.*

Then was he known by the name *Jehovah*, the independent, unchangeable God, keeping and performing his word againſt all that ſtood in the way. Thus he was known in the performance of his word to the patriarchs, to whom he was only known by the name *Almighty*, able to perform in due time what he had promiſed: for they lived not to know him in the performance of his promiſe, Exod. vi. 2.—8.

2. The church, or God's covenanted people, the ſeed of Iſrael, who were the Lord's people by the covenant of circumciſion, did then paſs out of the family-ſtate, wherein the church had been from the beginning, into the ſtate of a nation, and became a nation and kingdom of God, he being now related unto them as a nation by that national covenant, Exod. xix. 3. 4. 5. "And Moſes went up unto God, "and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, ſaying, "Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the houſe of Jacob, and tell the "children of Iſrael, Ye have ſeen what I did unto the E-"gyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought "you unto myſelf. Now therefore, if ye will obey my "voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye ſhall be a pe-"culiar treaſure unto me above all people; for all the earth "is mine; and ye ſhall be unto me a kingdom of prieſts, "and an holy nation. Theſe are the words which thou "ſhalt ſpeak unto the children of Iſrael." Read alſo ℣ 7. 8. 9. This was not before. God was not related to his people from the fall, nor to the houſe of Jacob in the capacity of a nation; for before the church was in families.

3. The worſhip of God, and his ſpecial preſence, was then

then ſettled in the ſanctuary, and all the ordinances of worſhip were fixed and eſtabliſhed; whereas that preſence of God and his worſhip had not a fixed abode before: for they built altars to the Lord in the ſeveral places where the Son of God appeared to them, when ſojourning in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange country. But now there is a ſettled place of the worſhip of God; as we ſee Exod. xxix. 42.—46. "This ſhall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your "generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congre- "gation, before the Lord; where I will meet with you, to "ſpeak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the "children of Iſrael, and the tabernacle ſhall be ſanctified by "my glory. And I will ſanctify the tabernacle of the con- "gregation, and the altar: I will ſanctify alſo both Aaron and "his ſons, to miniſter unto me in the prieſt's office. And I "will dwell amongſt the children of Iſrael, and will be their "God. And they ſhall know that I am the Lord their God, "that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I "may dwell amongſt them: I am the Lord their God."

4. By the covenant at Sinai, there was a ſeparation made betwixt all the nations of the earth, and Iſrael, now brought out of the land of Egypt, to be ſettled by themſelves in a land and kingdom of their own, where they had been ſtrangers before among other people.

Unto this ſeparation ſerved the law of commandments contained in ordinances delivered to that nation in the covenant at Sinai. The Apoſtle calls this *the enmity*, and *the wall of partition* betwixt them and all other people. And by the covenant containing this law, the nation of Iſrael was God's peculiar people; all that were not within the bond of that covenant being thereby excluded the church of God, as all that came within the bond of that covenant were of that nation and church; there being "one law for the ſtranger "and the home-born," Eph. ii. 11. 12. &c. Exod. xix. 5. "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, "then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all "people; for all the earth is mine."

Obſ. 2. "This great alteration in the church left the ſtate "of it earthly, and did not extend to heaven to make any "change there."

He ſpoke on earth; his voice ſhook the earth; but now he ſhaketh alſo heaven.

The eternal promiſe of all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt to all nations, was not yet performed by the

voice that "ſhook only the earth:" for by that voice, the Lord was doing no more but fulfilling that promiſe made to the patriarchs, which was temporal and earthly; ſo he then ſhook only the earth.

However great this ſhaking was, heaven was not moved by it. All things remained there as they were after the giving out of the firſt promiſe of Chriſt to fallen man: for from that time, it became the receptacle of the departing ſouls of them that died in the faith of the promiſed ſeed; and thoſe ſpirits of juſt men were there with the angels, expecting the full accompliſhment of that great promiſe; even as the ſaints in heaven now are expecting, till the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom be made his footſtool, and looking for the glorious day of the complete redemption and perfection of the whole church, according to that promiſe, in the faith of which they have died. Enoch was tranſlated into heaven without death, long before this voice that ſhook the earth; ſo that it did not extend to heaven to make any alteration there.

But all the earthly ſhadows of heavenly things to come by Chriſt, that were inſtituted from the fall, were ingroſſed in this covenant, and delivered to Iſrael, with many others added in the law of commandments contained in ordinances. Thus ſacrifices, inſtituted at the giving of the firſt promiſe, and a holy place of worſhip on earth, and an altar, and circumciſion, were all carried into the covenant at Sinai: ſo that whatever was earthly in the church, typifying heavenly things to come, belongs to that covenant made with Iſrael; and all the earthly ordinances that were before, together with many more now appointed, were now delivered to Iſrael, as rudiments by which they might come to the knowledge of Chriſt, like children beginning to learn; and the apoſtle calls them the "rudiments of the world." Theſe rudiments the law put into the hands of the Iſraelites: and this is one way wherein the law was their "ſchoolmaſter to bring them to "Chriſt," that they who believed might be juſtified by the faith of the promiſed ſeed.

So the ſtate of the church erected and eſtabliſhed by this ſhaking, was no more but earthly, and there was nothing heavenly in it, abſtract from the typical reference it had to heavenly things to come by the promiſed ſeed.

For the people that were brought within the bond of that covenant, and of whom the kingdom of God, eſtabliſhed thereby, did conſiſt, were an earthly ſeed, born after the fleſh, even Iſrael according to the fleſh. And though there were ſome

ſome among them "born of the Spirit," yet this belonged unto the New-Teſtament kingdom, and was their preparation for it, according to God's purpoſe, by means of the promiſe of Chriſt. This was of the promiſe of Chriſt not yet accompliſhed, and not of that covenant made with all the ſeed of Iſrael according to the fleſh. The earthly birth, or that birth after the fleſh, availed much in the ſtate of the church erected at Sinai, as to the enjoyment of the privileges of it. But now our Lord ſays to Nicodemus, "Except a man "be born again," or born from above, "he cannot ſee the "kingdom of God;" and Gal. iv. 26. "Jeruſalem which "is above is the mother of us all."

That covenant had alſo a worldly ſanctuary, and ordinances of divine ſervice, the way into the holieſt of all not being yet manifeſt, as the Apoſtle ſhews, Heb. ix. And he declares them no more but "earthly patterns of heavenly things to "come."

The Lord's kingdom in that nation was earthly. It was ſet up, eſtabliſhed, and defended, by earthly power, as an inſtrument in the Lord's mighty hand. When Joſhua was leading the people into the promiſed land, the Lord appeared unto him with a ſword in his hand, as the captain of the Lord's hoſt; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon men in that kingdom to enable them to fight. It is not ſo in the New-Teſtament kingdom, which is diſtinguiſhed from that, by being called *the kingdom of heaven:* and in oppoſition to that way of doing, of which we have inſtances, Heb. xi. we are called "to run the race ſet before us with patience, look-"ing unto Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith, who "endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame." That kingdom of God was managed in an earthly way; and, becauſe of the ſins of that nation againſt their covenanted God and King, it was ſubject to earthly changes and diſorders, waſting and captivity, and many evils of that kind, from within themſelves, and from the nations about. In oppoſition to this, the New Jeruſalem is ſaid to be "a quiet habitation," and "violence no more heard in it, waſting nor deſtruction in its borders," Iſ. xxxiii. 20. and lx. 18. This heavenly nation can receive no damage by earthly violence.

The inheritance of that church was an earthly inheritance. The promiſed land was a ſpot of this earth, though a type of the heavenly inheritance. The bleſſings promiſed to that nation in that covenant, were earthly bleſſings, "the good "things of this life;" and the evils contained in the curſes of it

it were earthly miſeries, Levit. xxvi. And it is not eaſy to conceive how a nation, as ſuch, can be the object of other ſort of bleſſings or curſes. Thus, according to their national keeping of that covenant, they enjoyed this bleſſedneſs in the promiſed land, and according to this the Lord explained his providences about them by his prophets. He does not ſo to other nations of the world. Now matters are far otherwiſe with the heavenly nation typified by this: "For if "in this life only we had hope, we are of all men moſt miſerable;" and, "He hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt." But ſetting aſide the promiſe of Chriſt given before this covenant, and the typical relation that theſe things had to Chriſt, and good things to come by him, we will find nothing heavenly and eternal in them. Our Lord ſays to the Jews, "Search the ſcriptures, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and theſe are "they which teſtify of me." And his ſaying ſeems to import this, If you find them not teſtifying of me, you will find nothing of eternal life in them.

SECT. III.

Obſ. 3. "IN the New Teſtament, there is another and "more notable change and alteration of things "on earth, and alſo in heaven, with reſpect unto the church."

"Whoſe voice then ſhook the earth: but now he hath "promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more I ſhake not the earth only, but alſo heaven."

The Son of God, who, by his voice in the covenant at Sinai, ſhook only the earth, now ſhakes again the earth, and alſo heaven, by the mediation in the new covenant. Then he was fulfilling earthly promiſes made to the patriarchs, as we have heard; ſo he ſhook only the earth: but now he appears in the accompliſhment of the better promiſes of heavenly bleſſings to ſinners of all nations of the earth, for the ſake of which the other promiſes were given; and ſo he ſhakes not the earth only, but alſo the heavens.

How he ſhakes the earth and alſo heaven, by his mediation in this new covenant, eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, we may ſee in the following inſtances.

Firſt, As to the earth, there is a remarkable ſhaking of it again, by the Mediator of the new covenant.

1. He deſcended into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9. He became the ſeed of the woman, and took on him the

the ſeed of Abraham and of David, according to the promiſes. "When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth "his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to re- "deem them that were under the law, that we might re- "ceive the adoption of ſons. And becauſe the children were "partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took "part of the ſame; that through death he might deſtroy "him that had the power of it, and deliver us. He hath "redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a "curſe for us; that the bleſſing of Abraham might come "on the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might re- "ceive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith."

This is the new thing that the Lord hath created in the earth, the performance of that good thing promiſed to the houſe of Iſrael, and to the houſe of Judah, which was not performed before. The promiſes had been long pregnant with it, and now they began to bring forth, when the fulneſs of time was come.

This notable new thing is the foundation of all the alterations on earth, and alſo in heaven, of which we here ſpeak.

2. He hath hereby aboliſhed the temporal covenant made with the nation of Iſrael, and ſet aſide all the earthly things thereby eſtabliſhed; and, in conſequence of this, he brought deſolation on Jeruſalem and the temple. But this is in the removing of the things that are ſhaken, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, ℣ 27. and therefore we ſhall not ſtay on it here.

3. By the doing away of that covenant, ſinners of all nations, formerly excluded by that "wall of partition", are brought into the church by faith in Chriſt, the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth; and ſo they become "a people that were not a people." Thus the earth and all nations are ſhaken, Haggai ii. 6. 7. "Every "valley is exalted, and every mountain brought low, that "the glory of the Lord might be revealed, and all fleſh ſee "it together," Iſ. xl. 4.—9. This great alteration is much inſiſted on in the New Teſtament; for inſtance, ſee Gal. iii. & iv. Eph. ii. & iii.

4. By this means the church hath paſſed out of the ſtate of an earthly nation, like that eſtabliſhed by the ſhaking of the earth at Sinai, and is now a glorious general aſſembly out of all nations, typified by that national aſſembly: for it is alſo a nation; but not earthly, not of this world; and ſo it very far excels the earthly nation.

The Apoſtle calls it "the general aſſembly and church of "the

" the firſt-born, which are written in heaven." Which points out to us, 1. That the New-Teſtament church conſiſts not of any one nation or ſort of men, as of old; but is a general aſſembly of all nations and kinds of people, " where there " is neither Jew nor Greek, circumciſion nor uncircumciſion, " barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, male nor female; " for they are all one in Chriſt Jeſus." Gal. iii. 28. " And " Chriſt is all unto them, and is in them all," Col. iii. 10. 11. For this is a church raiſed, not upon the temporal promiſe of making Abraham's ſeed, according to the fleſh, a great nation; but upon that promiſe, " In thy ſeed (which is Chriſt) " ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed." And, according to this promiſe, it conſiſts neither of one nation only, nor of any whole nation; but is a general aſſembly gathered out of the nations into one in Chriſt, and bleſſed in him. 2. That all true members of this church are the children of God, Gal. iii. 25. 26. And this is oppoſed to the condition of the church of Iſrael under the law, or Sinaitic covenant, which gendered unto bondage. For though to Iſrael, according to the fleſh, pertained the typical adoption; yet they were in bondage, and had not the true adoption, John viii. 33.—36.: and though they that believed on Chriſt in the Old-Teſtament promiſes, got " power" or right " to become " the ſons of God," or to be members of the church of the firſt-born, John i. 12.; yet that was not by the temporal covenant making all Iſrael the church of God; nor was this the common privilege of the whole church, erected by that covenant, as it is of this church; neither was the ſpirit of adoption given to believers themſelves under that covenant, as it is now, Gal. iv. 1.—6. Rom. viii. 14.—17. This is the common privilege of this whole general aſſembly and church: they are all joint heirs with Chriſt, the firſt-born from the dead, and ſo they are an aſſembly of firſt-born. There was never ſuch a church as this before. 3. The Apoſtle ſays, " They are written in heaven;" inrolled there, as being citizens of that heavenly Jeruſalem, and as having their nativity from thence: for they are all the children of that " Jeruſalem which is above," Gal. iv. 26. This is oppoſed to the earthly Jeruſalem, and a citizenſhip therein, the old earthly church.

Unto this church New-Teſtament believers on earth are come; now this ſtate of things, this church, hath taken place, and they are highly privileged beyond all expreſſion, in being members of this church. And this is what we have

now

now in the place of the old national church of Iſrael; ſo that there is no more any ſuch national covenant, or national church, as was before this general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born.

Secondly, Heaven is alſo ſhaken by the Mediator of the new covenant. And how is that?

1. "He that deſcended firſt into the lower parts of the "earth, is the ſame alſo that hath aſcended up far above all "heavens, that he might fill all things," Eph. iv. 9. 10.

He hath aſcended above the firſt heaven, the air, the ſeat of Satan's kingdom, who is therefore called "the prince of "the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2. He had ſhaken that kingdom, and made himſelf maſter of it, in his death, and is now aſcended above it.

He hath alſo aſcended above the heaven of the ſun, moon, and ſtars, and they are all put under the feet of the man Chriſt Jeſus. This ſame perſon was before their maker; but now they move under him, the Son of man, "made head over "all things to the church, which he hath purchaſed with his "own blood."

And he hath further aſcended into the heaven of God's glory, where the angels and ſpirits of juſt men were; and is exalted far above angels, and every name that is named in the world to come, unto the Father's right hand. This is the heaven which is here ſaid to be ſhaken.

And was there not a glorious change and alteration there, when the Lamb that was ſlain began to appear alive in the midſt of the throne? when he that was made lower than the angels for the ſuffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour, and ſat down with the Father on his throne? Was not the heaven remarkably ſhaken, when this high prieſt entered there, and preſented himſelf before the Father, with the blood of his own ſacrifice, whereby God is infinitely glorified, and his glory fully diſplayed to angels and men, and whereby the way into the holieſt is made manifeſt, and all his people for ever perfected? This was indeed a new thing in heaven: that blood of the new covenant was full of wonders, when it appeared there; as the fiery tongues, and a ruſhing wind, or vapour of ſmoke, were ſigns in the earth beneath, Acts ii. 16. 19. Was there not a glorious change in heaven, when the Son of David took his ſeat on his throne at the Father's right hand, and was "anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows," and crowned with many crowns, and proclaimed King

through heaven, (" Let all the angels of God worſhip him"), and through all the earth in the goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, and acknowledged in the joyful acclamations of worſhipping angels and ſpirits of juſt men in heaven, and of his people on the earth? There muſt have been a very great alteration in heaven, when the Mediator of the new covenant prepared the throne of his kingdom there, and ſat down on the throne of his holineſs to rule the nations from thence, Pſal xlvii. 5.—8. and ciii 19.—22.

This appearance of Jeſus Chriſt in heaven, as it was, ſo to ſpeak, the filling up of a place there that was empty before, ſo it made a vaſt alteration in the whole ſtate of things there. For,

2. The Old-Teſtament ſaints that died in the faith, and were in heaven before Jeſus entered there, were hereby perfected; that is, they came to the enjoyment of that which they believed and hoped for on earth, and which they were expecting in heaven; even the accompliſhment of the great Old-Teſtament promiſes of Chriſt, and the good things to be brought in by him They now ſee the promiſed ſeed in whom all the nations of the earth are bleſſed, and their happineſs is enlarged in becoming members of this glorious general aſſembly and church now erected, and in receiving of the ſpirit from Jeſus Chriſt, as it was given to him in an inconceivably-glorious manner, after he aſcended to the right hand of God, that he might fill the things in heaven as well as on earth, Acts ii. 33. Eph iv. 10. This was David's faith and hope: now he ſees the throne of his kingdom eſtabliſhed before him for ever. And this is what he ſets forth as the faith, hope, earneſt deſire, and prayer of the Old-Teſtament ſaints, Pſal. lxv. 4. 5.; where we ſee they expected to be abundantly ſatisfied with the good things of this houſe of God, which is a houſe of prayer for all fleſh, to which they have acceſs, according to an election of grace. And the Old-Teſtament ſaints have the anſwer of their prayers for the accompliſhment of the promiſe of the Meſſiah, in thoſe terrible things in righteouſneſs which befell the Jewiſh nation when the Lord demoliſhed that earthly church, and in his becoming the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and " of them afar off upon the ſea, or in the iſles." And now David, that ſat in the Lord's throne in the typical kingdom, which is removed, has all his deſire, in beholding his Son and Lord ſitting on his throne, and in being a fellow-ſubject with New-Teſtament believers of all nations. Moſes, who was faithful

faithful as a ſervant in all the old earthly houſe, which is demoliſhed, is now farther advanced, in being a part of his heavenly houſe, a ſtone of this glorious building of God over which is Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God; yea, that great prophet and lawgiver is now more happy, in hearing this prophet, and receiving the law from his mouth. And Abraham, the father of the faithful, that rejoiced to ſee his day afar off, is now bleſſed among his brethren of all nations, in beholding his glorious promiſed ſeed. Thus the Lord Jeſus, our King, reigns in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriouſly, Iſ. xxiv. 23. and they are come to the full enjoyment of what they were till now expecting: ſo being perfected, according to Heb. xi. 9. 10. 13. 14. 15. 16. 39. 40. and xii. 23. "they "received not the promiſe —— God having provided ſome "better thing for us, that they without us ſhould not be "made perfect. And we are come to the ſpirits of juſt men "made perfect."

3. The innumerable company of angels are likewiſe brought into a new order, in ſubjection to the man Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Son of God, 1 Pet. iii. 22. Col. ii. 10. They have received a great addition to their knowledge, and their happineſs is much enlarged now beyond what it was before, by being admitted to behold the glory of Chriſt in the New-Teſtament church, 1 Tim iii 16. 1 Pet. i. 12. Eph. iii. 10. and by their having a part in this glorious ſociety whereof Chriſt is the head. For though he took not on him their nature, and though they were not redeemed by his blood, and be not ſo near to him as his brethren the redeemed are; yet they owe their preſervation from falling to him, according to their election unto this his kingdom: therefore they are called *the elect-angels*, 1 Tim. v. 21. They are comprehended in the things in heaven that are now gathered together in one in Chriſt, with the things on earth, and reconciled by him, Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20. And we are ſaid to be come to the innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22. They bear ſome part in the church's worſhip, Heb. i. Rev. v. 11. 12. They are now fellow-ſervants with us unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9. And this is one excellency of the New-Teſtament church above the Old, that it is not ſubjected to angels, as that was; but they are now ſubjected to him that was made lower than they for the ſuffering of death, and are fellow-ſubjects with his ſervants, Heb. i. & ii. Conſider Chap. ii. 2. 3. "They are all miniſtring ſpirits, "ſent forth to miniſter unto them who ſhall be heirs of ſal-

" vation," and are preſent in goſpel-churches; and they will appear with the head of the church miniſtering to him and his members, when the church ſhall be fully ſeparated from all other ſocieties, Matth. xiii. and xxv. 31. Something of this kind ſeems to be pointed out by our Lord, in his ſaying to Nathanael, when he profeſſed his faith in him as the King of Iſrael, " Becauſe I ſaid unto thee, I ſaw thee under the " fig-tree, believeſt thou? thou ſhalt ſee greater things than " theſe. And he ſaith unto him, Verily verily I ſay unto " you, Hereafter you ſhall ſee heaven open, and the angels " of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man." This new order among the angels miniſtering unto David's Son in his kingdom, according to Pſal. ciii. toward the cloſe, is a notable alteration in heaven; and it may be alſo noticed, that the angels ſeem to have received ſomething of his ſpirit, for ſerving him in his church, Rev. xix. 10. Thus he that aſcended above all heavens, that he might fill all things, has filled the Old-Teſtament ſaints, and his angels, and now they are the angels of the Son of man, Matth. xxiv. 30. 31.

4. There is a notable alteration in the worſhip of heaven, by Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant his entering there, and appearing as the ſlain Lamb alive again in the midſt of the throne. Of this we may have ſome view in comparing the 4th and 5th chapters of the Revelation, and conſidering the difference betwixt the worſhip deſcribed in the one and the other. Yea, and now heaven is opened as the ſanctuary for ſinners of all nations on earth, and a houſe of prayer for all people, that they may join in the worſhip of the Lamb, and of him that ſits on the throne, with that glorious company above, as one worſhipping aſſembly, Heb. ix. and x. This was not while the firſt tabernacle was ſtanding; for then the way into " the holieſt of all" was not thus manifeſt. But more of this afterward. Only we may notice to this purpoſe, Rev. v. 13. and xiv. 2. 3. where the worſhip of the company of heaven is repreſented, and the company of the redeemed on earth joining with them in it, and none but they.

But this leads unto another obſervation, which is not alien from the words, according to the view I have of them; and it is thus.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Obſ. 4. "IN this ſecond ſhaking, heaven and earth are "joined together." For this we may conſider Eph. i. 10. Col. i. 20. and this context. And how this is, we may conſider under theſe two heads.

1. They in heaven, and believers on earth, are one ſociety, one city of God, one building and houſe of God, one kingdom and one family, whereof the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the father, and he the Firſt-born, the antitype of the firſt-born in the family ſtate of the church, Eph. iii. 15. The children of this family upon earth, who are but as babes in the cradle, or upon the breaſts, in compariſon of thoſe above, are yet children of the family, as well as they who ſit at their Father's table there. It is one whole family. They in heaven, and they on earth, are not two churches, but one: the ſpouſe of Chriſt is but one. It is one kingdom of God; and they who were laſt, in reſpect of the Jews, who inherited the old earthly kingdom of God, do now come from the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, and ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God. Thus the apoſtle ſays of the believing Gentiles on earth, that they were "fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the "houſhold of God;" and that they were fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt by the goſpel, Eph. ii. 19. and iii. 5. 6. The apoſtle calls this the myſtery of Chriſt now revealed by the Spirit, even as Eph. i. 9. 10. he calls this the myſtery of his will made known to them; his gathering together in one, in the fulneſs of time, all things in Chriſt which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him. The church in heaven and on earth is the body of Chriſt, his fulneſs, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all, and one whole building, which, being all fitly framed together in him, the foundation and corner-ſtone, groweth unto an holy temple in him.

2. There is a new communication between heaven and earth opened by this ſhaking of the heaven and earth together. The ſaints on earth have acceſs unto that holieſt of all by faith, in the new and living way conſecrated for them through the vail of Chriſt's fleſh, and join with them above in the New-Teſtament worſhip: and from the Lamb in the midſt of the throne, the ſame Spirit of his that fills them above, comes down upon all the redeemed upon earth; ſo that

that they have a bleſſed communion together in Chriſt, in whom they are one. And heaven being now opened by Jeſus's entering there, the angels of God are aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of man, the antitype of Jacob's ladder; which is the great thing that our Lord called Nathanael and the diſciples to look after.

Obſ. 5. "By means of this ſhaking, not the earth only, "but alſo heaven, the ſtate of the church is now become "heavenly," Gal. iv. 26. Phil. iii. 20. Eph. i. 3. and ii. 6. and iii. 10. Col. iii. 1. and the context. On this account, it is called the heavenly Jeruſalem. This alſo is the reaſon of that common deſignation of the church in the New Teſtament, *the kingdom of heaven*. And that the ſtate of the church is now heavenly, may appear, if we conſider theſe things.

1. The ſanctuary, or holy place of the church's worſhip, is now heaven itſelf, where Jeſus is entered. The New-Teſtament ſanctuary is not a worldly ſanctuary, as that of the Old Teſtament. It is no more in any place of this earth, John iv. 21.—"Ye ſhall neither in this mountain, nor yet "at Jeruſalem, worſhip the Father" Heb. ix. 11. "Chriſt "being come an high prieſt—of good things to come, by "a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with "hands, that is to ſay, not of this building" Yet this church has a ſanctuary as well as the Old Teſtament church. It has ſomething inſtead of that worldly ſanctuary, which is done away. And the Apoſtle plainly tells us, that this is heaven itſelf, Heb. ix. 12. 24. "By his own blood he entered "in once into that holy place.—For Chriſt is not entered "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures "of the true; but into heaven itſelf, now to appear in the "preſence of God for us. The way into this holieſt of all "was not yet made manifeſt, while the firſt tabernacle was "yet ſtanding," Heb. ix. 8. But now by Jeſus's entering heaven, as the high-prieſt of the church, heaven is become the ſanctuary for us; and we have "boldneſs to enter into "this holieſt by his blood, by a new and living way that he "hath conſecrated for us, through the vail, that is to ſay, "his fleſh," Heb. x. 19. 20.

It was the appearance of the Son of God foreſhewing his incarnation, and ſome way manifeſting himſelf preſent, that made the places where he ſo manifeſted himſelf holy. And when he was actually incarnate, his preſence in the ſecond temple made it more glorious than the firſt, though it wanted the

the Schehinah. And when he is now no more ſo in this world, but in heaven, his perſonal preſence there, in the human nature, makes that the ſanctuary, and we have acceſs into the holieſt of all through the vail of his fleſh.

The glory of God ſhines unto the church in Jeſus Chriſt, the image of the inviſible God. The goſpel, with its ordinances, manifeſt the glory of God unto believers, in the face or perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, who is in heaven, at the Father's right hand, beyond the reach of all the world's obſervation, and is ſeen only by the faith of his people there, John xiv. 19.

The firſt thing that a convinced ſelf-condemned ſinner (for none other come to God by him) has to do with, in drawing near to God, is the fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt, his human nature, that ſuffered, which is now in heaven: "I beheld, and "lo, in the midſt of the throne ſtood a Lamb, as it had "been ſlain." We conſider him, in the worſhip of God, as the ſlain Lamb, now alive in heaven: and herein we diſcern the infinite worth of his glorious divine perſon; and ſo we aſcribe worthineſs to him in our worſhip. In ſeeing him thus, the glory of all the divine attributes opens itſelf to us in him, the brightneſs of the Father's glory; and in ſeeing him we ſee the Father, having liberty to come to him as a father. And in the ſlain Lamb we have all the fulneſs of the Holy Ghoſt dwelling, to be communicated with us, by whoſe influence alſo we thus enter into the holieſt, through the vail of Chriſt's fleſh. Thus we find the one Godhead in three glorious perſons, in this our entrance into the holieſt through the vail of his fleſh. Thus we have the object of worſhip in this heavenly kingdom. "This is the true God, "and eternal life. Let us keep ourſelves from idols." Here it is that God dwells with men, in the heavenly houſe not made with hands: and ſo far as men have acceſs here, ſo far they are near unto God in his ordinances.

The throne of grace, the mercy-ſeat pointed out to us in the goſpel, is now no where but there, where Jeſus, the true propitiation, is. There only is the church's high prieſt miniſtering, and there only is the true ſanctuary, the true place of worſhip, Heb. iv. 14. 15. 16. and viii. 1.—5.

There is now no more any place on earth, where the whole church aſſembles for worſhip; but they all aſſemble in the heavenly Jeruſalem, where Jeſus is, the antitype of that on earth, to which the church of Iſrael aſſembled, and toward which they worſhipped from all corners of the land. Here they on earth have their converſation, Phil. iii. 20. and unto that

that place the tribes of God go up now worſhipping God, all ſerving in the newneſs of the Spirit: and there are no worſhippers here but ſpiritual worſhippers. Thus there is an end put to all controverſies about earthly holy places, and temples of God made with hands, John iv. 20. 21.

2. The ſeat of the kingdom, and of the church's power and government, is now only in heaven, where the Son of David is ſet on his throne, at the Father's right hand. It is no more on this earth, nor any ſpot of it, as of old. For this kingdom is ſpiritual and heavenly, and ſo cannot have an earthly ſeat. It puts forth its power upon the ſouls of men, and influences the inward man, the ſpirit of our minds. Therefore ſays our Lord, Luke xvii. 21.—"They ſhall not "ſay, Lo here, or, lo there."

Men of all nations and places of the earth do, at one time or another, belong unto this kingdom; and it is but ſome of the people, a few, a little flock, in compariſon, in any nation of this world, that have been, or are the ſubjects of this kingdom. So it hath not its ſeat in any nation of this world, nor in them all together.

The ſubjects of this kingdom that live on earth, are all "ſtrangers and ſojourners" in it, having "here no conti-"nuing city. And if in this life they had hope only, they "were of all men the moſt miſerable." For the ſeat of the kingdom to which they belong is not here, but in heaven, where the throne of the kingdom is, and their King ſits ruling on his throne. The thrones of judgment, the thrones of the houſe of David, were ſet in Jeruſalem that was on earth, and there was the ſeat of that kingdom; but the throne of this kingdom is above, in the heavenly Jeruſalem.

There is the bulk and greateſt number of the ſubjects, living at reſt with their King. Few, in compariſon, are on this earth, at any time; and theſe have their houſes, their manſions, there, being here only as in a tabernacle or tent, upon a journey, or in a warfare, 2 Cor. v. from the beginning, John xiv. 2. 3. and there they have their nativity, "Jeruſa-"lem which is above is the mother of them all." They have their citizenſhip there, Phil. iii. 20. and their names are inrolled there as citizens of that city, even while they are ſojourning on this earth. Their whole ſtrength and furniture for their warfare on earth is there, and from thence, Eph. vi. 10. 12.

And all the acts of government upon the ſubjects of Chriſt in his goſpel-churches on earth, have their whole authority and

and force only from thence, and there they are all ratified and confirmed, or they are null and void, Matth. xviii. 18. "Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in hea-"ven: and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be loo-"ſed in heaven." Thus the diſcipline of the viſible churches of Chriſt, which is of his inſtitution, is heavenly.

3. The inheritance of the New-Teſtament church is alſo in heaven. Whatever it be that was prefigured by Canaan, the land of promiſe, with the privileges and bleſſings thereof, that is certainly the inheritance of the New-Teſtament church; and where that inheritance is, to which Old-Teſtament ſaints looked through that vail, there is now the inheritance of the church. Now, that is heaven, Heb. xi. 9. 10. 13.—16. The privileges and promiſed bleſſings of this church are with Chriſt in the heavenly places; and his ſubjects on earth enjoy what they have of them here in their converſation there by faith, ſeeking the things that are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God; for they are dead to this earth, and their life is hid with Chriſt in God, Eph. i. 3. Col. iii. 1.—4. The inheritance of the ſaints, to which they are begotten, and which they are called to hope for, is declared to be in heaven, 1 Pet. i. 4. While on this earth, they are exerciſed with many temptations and afflictions to wean them from this world, to prepare them for that, and make them earneſtly deſirous of it. And the joy and pleaſure proper to them in this world, is that which they have in the hopes and foretaſtes of that inheritance.

Our Lord calls his diſciples, "not to lay up for themſelves "treaſures on earth, but in heaven." See his exhortation, Matth. vi. 19. 20. 21. And the Apoſtle tells the Hebrews, "That after they were enlightened, they took joyfully the "ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves, that they "had in heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance," Heb. x. 34. How wonderfully did the goſpel of the kingdom, upon the firſt down-pouring of the ſpirit, draw the hearts of the Jewiſh converts off from their inheritances in that land, which was before the land of promiſe, unto this better and more enduring inheritance, typified by that which is done away?

The Apoſtle complains of the Judaizing teachers, who were for an earthly ſtate of the church, "that they minded "earthly things;" and, in oppoſition to them, he ſays, "Our converſation is in heaven." They are rare, but happy, whatever their condition be in this world, that can now join

him heartily in that ſaying of his. But then they had a clearer view of the myſtery of the kingdom of heaven, and were more powerfully influenced by what they knew of it, than we. And I doubt not but to the loſs of that is much owing our darkneſs of mind, and carnality in the worſhip of God, our conformity to a preſent world, our want of the primitive mortification, holineſs and heavenlineſs, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, ſo much complained of; but in vain, while the cauſes of the things complained of are neglected.

From what has been already ſaid, we may have ſome view of the difference betwixt the Old Teſtament and the New, and betwixt the church of the Old Teſtament and the New-Teſtament church, and how far the New excells the Old. The Jews thought, that the declaration of this in the preaching of the goſpel by the apoſtles, was a very great reflection upon the Old Teſtament, and tended to weaken its authority; yea, and to make it void. But the Apoſtle declares, that he who hath ſhaken both the earth and heaven, is the ſame whoſe voice then ſhook the earth; and that this new ſhaking is the accompliſhment of his promiſe in the Old Teſtament. Chriſtians will own, that the writers of the New Teſtament were inſpired, for explaining and declaring the fulfilment and great intent of the Old-Teſtament prophecies, by the ſame ſpirit that indited them: for no prophecy of the Old Teſtament is of any private interpretation, "ſeeing the pro-" phecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy " men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy " Ghoſt," 2 Pet. i. 20. 21. And the goſpel-declaration of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that follows, makes that manifeſt which the prophets were "ſearching into, to " find what or what manner of time the ſpirit of Chriſt, " which was in them, did ſignify, when it teſtified of it be-" forehand," 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12. And, by this means, we have the word of prophecy more confirmed unto us, 2 Pet. i. 19. Now, the Apoſtle here explains that prophecy of Haggai, chap. ii. 5. 6. 7.—— "The word that I covenanted with " you when ye came out of Egypt, and my ſpirit remain-" ing among you: fear ye not. For thus ſaith the Lord of " hoſts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will ſhake the " heavens, and the earth, and the ſea, and the dry land; " and I will ſhake all nations, and the deſire of all nations " ſhall come."

What the Apoſtle inſinuates, of the voice at Sinai its being

ing the voice of the Son or Word of God, ſeems to be taken from this prophecy. And, in that promiſe of another ſhaking, there appears a reference unto the ſhaking of the earth in the making of that covenant of which the Prophet ſpake immediately before; and the Apoſtle plainly ſays, "that this ſhaking of the earth and heaven," ſpoken of in that promiſe, had been when he wrote; "but now," ſays he, "he hath promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more, I ſhake not "the earth only, but alſo heaven. Wherefore we recei- "ving a kingdom,"——

But he takes ſpecial notice of that word in the prophecy, "Yet once more," and inſiſts upon the import of it; which is, the changing and removing the things eſtabliſhed by that firſt covenant, and the eſtabliſhing of a new ſtate of things, which cannot be again ſhaken, and therefore muſt remain, ℣ 27. "And this word, Yet once more, ſignifies the remo- "ving of thoſe things that are ſhaken, as of things that are "made, that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken, may re- "main." And here is matter for ſome more obſervations.

SECT. V.

Obſ. 6. "BY this laſt ſhaking of the heavens and the earth, "the things which were eſtabliſhed by the ſha- "king of the earth are removed."

The moveable things, as all the temporal and earthly things of that firſt covenant were, are ſet aſide.

The worldly ſanctuary, with the ordinances of divine ſervice belonging to it, ſtands no more, Heb. ix.

The worldly kingdom eſtabliſhed by that firſt covenant is alſo removed, with all things belonging to it. "The ſceptre "is" now "departed from Judah, and the Lawgiver from "between his feet; for Shiloh" is "come." "God" has "o- "verturned, overturned, overturned" that worldly kingdom, which was his church, "till he came whoſe right is" to rule the kingdom of God; and God's kingdom, which is not "now" of this world, is given to him.

And to this we may add the removal of the worldly inheritance: "Here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek "one to come," Heb. xiii. 14.

The temple, with what belonged to it, and the kingdom, eſpecially in the houſe of David, were as the ſun and moon in the Old-Teſtament church: for that kingdom was called a light before God in Jeruſalem, "the city which he had cho-

" ſen to put his name there," 1 Kings xi. 36. This light, this ſun, is now turned into darkneſs, and has diſappeared, to give place unto the " Sun of righteouſneſs," who reigns in Mount Zion, and " before his ancients glorioufly." The old ſanctuary, with what belonged to it, fitly compared to the moon, (as being changeable, and regulated by the moon, and having no true light of its own, but what is borrowed from Chriſt typified in it), hath its iſſue in the blood of Chriſt, Eph. ii. 15. " Thus the ſun is turned into darkneſs, and the " moon into blood, and all the light they give" is far outſhined by the light of that " great" and notable " day of the " Lord that now is," Acts ii. 20.

In a word, all the glory of the letter is done away, to give place to the more excellent glory of the ſpirit and ſenſe of that letter, 2 Cor. iii.

Theſe things were not removed but by the removing the covenant which did eſtabliſh them. And theſe texts plainly ſhew the doing away of that covenant, Gal. iv. 22. 24. 30. " For it is written, that Abraham had two ſons; the " one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman.—— " Which things are an allegory: for theſe are the two cove- " nants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to " bondage, which is Agar.—— Nevertheleſs, what ſaith the " Scripture? Caſt out the bond woman and her ſon: for the " ſon of the bond woman ſhall not be heir with the ſon of " the free woman." Heb. viii. 6.—13.—— " In that he ſaith, " A new covenant, he hath made the firſt old. Now, that " which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away."

That covenant could not be removed but by its being fulfilled by Chriſt, and reaching its end in him, Matth. v. 17. 18. Eph. ii. 12.—16. " That at that time ye were without " Chriſt, being ſtrangers from the covenants.—— But now " in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were far off, are made " nigh by the blood of Chriſt. For he is our peace, who " hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle " wall of partition between us; having aboliſhed in his fleſh " the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances," &c.

That firſt covenant therefore is now removed, and that on theſe accounts. (1.) As being the miniſtration of death, and " gendering unto bondage," 2 Cor. iii. Gal. iv. 24. (2.) As being unable (by itſelf) to juſtify the covenanted, and bring them truly near to God, or to make a man perfect as pertaining to the conſcience, Heb. vii. 18. 19. and viii. 9. 12. and ix. 1. 9. 15. and x. 1. 2. 16. 17. (3.) As affording only

ly a ſhadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, but vailing them, 2 Cor. iii. Heb. x. 1. and viii. 7. 9. 11. And ſo not being able to make God manifeſt to all the covenanted people. (4.) As not being able to make the covenanted people holy, and truly obedient to God, nor to keep them for ever in ſubjection to him, 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. viii. 9. 10. (5.) As being worldly, and not ſpiritual and heavenly, 2. Cor. iii. Gal. iii. 3. and Col. ii. 8. 20. (6.) As being a wall of partition betwixt the covenanted nation, and all other people, excluding all them that came not within the bond of it, from the church of God, and from hope in the promiſe of Chriſt, Eph. ii. 11.—14.

By the aboliſhing of this covenant, the earthly ſeed, the earthly nation, that ſtood related to God by it, are likewiſe removed, Gal. iv. 30. 31. John viii. 33.—36. and Heb. viii. 6.—13. And if that people come in again, as no doubt the elect among them will, they muſt come in upon another and more durable footing; even the ſame upon which the ſpiritual ſeed of Abraham in all nations ſtand eternally related to God.

Obſ. 7. "The things that are eſtabliſhed by this ſhaking "of the heavens and the earth, are things that muſt remain."

And what are theſe things that cannot be ſhaken, and therefore remain?

1. All that was ſpiritual and eternal in the word and promiſes of God, and in the experience of the ſaints, ſtands and remains in and by the new covenant. As we obſerved before, that all that was earthly and typical about the church of God, from the fall of man, was carried into the covenant at Sinai, the old teſtament; ſo now we may obſerve, that all that was ſpiritual of old ſtands and is eſtabliſhed in the new covenant: "All the promiſes of God are yea and amen "in Chriſt," 2 Cor. i. 20. The promiſe of the ſeed of the woman, the enmity betwixt the two ſeeds, and the victory of the woman's ſeed; the promiſe of the ſeed of Abraham, and of eternal bleſſedneſs to all the nations in him; the promiſe of the ſeed of David to ſit on his throne, and rule the true Iſrael, the true kingdom of God, for evermore, with all the promiſes and prophecies explaining and enlarging upon theſe, ſtand good in the accompliſhment of them, by this ſhaking of the earth and heaven; and all they who died in the faith of theſe promiſes, have reached the end of their faith, and remain in the New-Teſtament church, to enjoy eternally that which they believed and hoped for.

2. The

2. The moral law, the ſame for ſubſtance under all covenants, and which has been in all the covenants that God made with men, ſtands and remains here, and is written, not on tables of ſtone, but in the hearts of all them that are within the bond of this covenant, that they may never depart from God.

This eternal rule of righteouſneſs could not be ſhaken, Matth. v. 17. 19.; but as it was always ſuited to the manifeſtation God made of himſelf in the covenants he entered into with man; ſo the New-Teſtament revelation being the cleareſt and fulleſt, and making known what before was hid in God, makes that law ſuitable to itſelf; and therefore it is given in the New Teſtament in another and more excellent manner than it was given to Adam, or the children of Iſrael at Sinai. It would be long to declare this fully, we ſhall only notice, that the moral law ſtands in the new covenant, delivered by the Lord Redeemer to the church, and we have it in this covenant, together with the inſtitutions of Chriſt, under the covert of his blood, even as the book of the law in the firſt covenant was ſprinkled with the blood of the ſacrifices, Heb. ix. 19. 20. 23. And to engage to do the duties required in the law any otherwiſe but as the law ſtands in the new covenant, ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, is to engage to fulfill the covenant of works ſome way, and ſo to ſubject ourſelves to the curſe; and therefore there can be no ſuch thing as a covenant of duties between God and us under the New Teſtament, diſtinct from the New Teſtament which is in Chriſt's blood. The obedience of the Lord's covenanted people is better ſecured in the new covenant than ever it was before, either in the covenant made with mankind in the firſt Adam, or in the covenants made with Iſrael after the fleſh: for now he puts his laws into their mind, and writes them in their hearts: and as their obedience is thereby, and in its own nature, more ſpiritual, and more free; ſo, when they are perfected, as they will infallibly be, their obedience will very far excel, not only Iſrael's poor ſervice, in the "oldneſs of the letter," but Adam's obedience before he fell. And how much more excellent is conformity to the ſecond Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, in our obedience, by his Spirit, than conformity to the firſt Adam, even while innocent, by our natural powers?

3. When the types, the ſhadows, are fled away, and the patterns of heavenly things are ſhaken off, the heavenly things

things themſelves, the ſubſtances of theſe ſhadows, ſtand by the new covenant, and remain eſtabliſhed for ever.

The original word rendered *removed*, may import *tranſlated*; and we may make this obſerve upon it, "That whatever was excellent in the types, we have it unto much "better advantage in the antitype, when the types are ſet "aſide." For here we have heavenly things for earthly, and the things themſelves eſtabliſhed to remain for ever, when the figures and patterns of them are done away.

Here is the eternal covenant, ſealed with the blood of the Son of God, inſtead of that earthly temporal covenant, dedicated with the blood of beaſts: A covenant more ſure, more efficacious, more extenſive, eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, and having a better people covenanted.

Here is the glorious heavenly ſanctuary inſtead of that worldly figure of it, and ordinances of divine ſervice more pure, ſpiritual, and heavenly, wherein we have a more glorious diſcovery of the living God in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, and more intimate nearneſs with him. This ſanctuary is a houſe of prayer for all people, and it hath more excellent worſhippers than the old, and ſhall ſtand for ever.

Here alſo is the "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, "and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for them who "are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto" it; even the inheritance which the Father gave to his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and of which he took poſſeſſion for himſelf and his people, when he aſcended, that they might enjoy it with him for evermore.

And here is the true kingdom, not earthly, as of old, but heavenly; and managed, not by dying men, but by Jeſus, the true God, manifeſt in the fleſh, and that has ariſen from the dead to judge the earth, and to inherit all nations, Pſal. lxxxii. 8.: A more excellent kingdom for power and glory, number of ſubjects, and their quality, proſperity, and peace; and for ſtability. Of this kingdom there ſhall be no end, for it hath the things that cannot be moved.

But againſt this it may be objected, Shall not this kingdom, and the things of it, be moved at the ſecond coming of Chriſt? and will there not be a new ſtate of things, when he ſhall deliver up the kingdom to the Father? How is it then ſaid, that this is an everlaſting kingdom, and that this ſtate of things will remain for ever?

Anſ. 1. It is evident, at leaſt, this kingdom, and the things eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed in the ſhaking of the heavens and earth, will remain until the conſummation of all things.

2. Theſe things that thus remain will, at that time, have their perfection; ſo that will not be another ſtate of the church, but the perfection of this that now is; even as the ſetting aſide of the tabernacle, and building the temple, and the glory of the kingdom under Solomon, after the people were ſettled in the land of promiſe, made not another ſtate of that church, but was the perfection of that ſtate which was before. So we ſee ſometimes the Apoſtle ſpeaks of our being come to the heavenly Jeruſalem, and receiving this kingdom already; and ſometimes ſays, "It is to come," and that we "ſeek this city to come:" for though we be come to it, and it be already ſet up; yet it will not appear till then, nor will it till then be perfected; and ſo we ſeek it and expect it as to come.

Now, whatſoever things they be that ſhall then be done away, they are ſuch things as belong unto the imperfection of this ſtate of the church; and when the full perfection of this ſtate is come, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt, then the things that attended it while not yet perfected, will be no more. Of this ſort are the preaching of the goſpel, and the inſtitutions of the New Teſtament for the ſubjects of this kingdom ſojourning on earth, which are to continue only till the end of the world, Eph. iv. 10.—13. We may alſo notice what the Apoſtle ſays, 1 Cor. xiii. 9.—12. "For we "know in part, and we propheſy in part; but when that "which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall "be done away. When I was a child, I ſpake as a child, "I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I "became a man, I put away childiſh things. For now we "ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now I "know in part, but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am "known."

The ſubjects of the Son of God, ſo far as they are ſubject to him, are ſubjected to the Father, who is excepted in putting all things under him, for this purpoſe, that the things ſubjected to the Son may be thereby ſubject to him, who is repreſented by the Son in his kingdom. But though the ſubjects of Chriſt, who are his members, be thus ſubject to the Father; yet they are not fully ſubjected to him, while the enemies of his Son's kingdom remain, or while he rules in the midſt of his enemies, and his people are not totally delivered from them. But when Chriſt ſhall have fully deſtroyed his

his enemies, and put them under the feet of his members, as they are already under his own feet perſonally conſidered, and fully ſubjected all his members to the Father, then he ſhall rule no more in the midſt of his enemies, or for bringing his people in ſubjection to the Father: for then will he deliver up that commiſſion fulfilled, and deliver them up perfectly ſubjected to the Father in himſelf their head. And then, when that which belonged to the imperfection of this kingdom is ended, this kingdom will be in its perfection, and the ſubjects remain for ever in perfect ſubjection to the Father in the Son, their head, from whom the whole body has that denomination, *the Son*, as being all joint heirs with him, and as being his members, even as the whole body, the church, is called *Chriſt*, 1 Cor. xii. 12. God is already in all thoſe who are members of Chriſt's body the church; but is not yet all in them, while they remain unperfected, and while the laſt enemy is not deſtroyed; neither yet is he in all thoſe who are deſigned by him for being members of the church; but when the laſt enemy is deſtroyed, and God is "all in all, "and every one of them," this will be the perfection of the ſtate wherein they were before; "only that which is in part "ſhall be done away, when that which is perfect is come," 1 Cor. xv. 24.—28.

The temple of God that is now a-building, and is all receiving ſtability, unity and order, glory and beauty, from that glorious foundation and corner-ſtone Chriſt, and is growing in him unto a holy temple; when it is fully built and finiſhed, will not be another building, but this ſame perfected, and it will ſtand perfect for ever, as a holy temple in him the Lord, even as it is "now fitly framed together, and growing "in him," Eph. ii. 20. 21.

3. Chriſt, the head of the church, is already in the poſſeſſion of that glorious perfection of this ſtate unto which his people ſhall then come in fellowſhip with him; for their perfection will conſiſt in their conformity to him, and communion with him, in that which he now poſſeſſes, John iii. 2. Col. iii. 3. 4. Seeing then he is perfected, and will remain ſo for ever, the perfection of his members, in fellowſhip with him, in that whereof he is already poſſeſſed for them, will not be another ſtate of the church, but the perfection of this ſame which hath taken place by the ſhaking of the heaven and the earth; ſo then the ſtate of the church, raiſed by this laſt ſhaking, muſt remain for ever, muſt grow unto perfection, but can never be done away.

Obſ. 8. "The things removed were moveable, as being "made things; but the things that remain are unmoveable, "and cannot be ſhaken."

This is the reaſon of the removing the things that are ſhaken, and of the remaining of the things eſtabliſhed by the ſhaking of heaven and earth. The things removed were, in their own nature, moveable; but the things that remain are things "that cannot be ſhaken," 1 Pet. i. 24. 25.

For, 1. The things removed were merely created things; but the things that remain have ſomething uncreated in them.

The blood of the Old Teſtament was the blood of mere creatures, and all their ſacrifices were mere creatures; but the blood ſealing the New Teſtament is the "blood of God," and the ſacrifice is divine, Heb. ix. & x.

They that ſat on the throne of the Lord in that his earthly kingdom were mere men; but the Son of man, who ſits in the throne of his kingdom, is "Jehovah, the Lord of hoſts, "Jehovah our righteouſneſs."

The prieſts that miniſtered in the worldly ſanctuary were weak dying men; but the miniſter of the heavenly ſanctuary is the eternal Son of God, "able to ſave to the uttermoſt all "that come to God by him," Heb. iv. 14. 15. and vii.

The inheritance of the earthly church was a ſpot of this earth flowing with milk and honey, and abounding in earthly good things; but the inheritance of this church is "all the "fulneſs of God."

The glory of the Old-Teſtament church, even that within the vail, was no more but a created thing; but here the uncreated glory of the inviſible God ſhines in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt: and this is the glory of the New-Teſtament church 2 Cor. iii.

2. The things removed were of this building, earthly things made on earth, and many of them made with mens hands; ſo they might be ſhaken: but the things remaining are ſpiritual and heavenly, not of this building, nor made with hands, and therefore cannot be ſhaken.

The things of the Jewiſh church were earthly, made on earth. The law, though written with the finger of God, yet it was written and ingraven only in ſtones; and this ingraving, however durable, could be done away. The ſtones were broken by Moſes; and when renewed, they might be defaced by time, and deſtroyed; as they were at length. But now the law of Chriſt is written in the hearts of his ſubjects, with the Spirit of the living God, ſent down from heaven with

with the goſpel, dwelling and abiding in them for ever: and this can never be done away: "I will put my fear in their "hearts, they ſhall never depart from me."

The things done away, the tabernacle and temple, were the work of mens hands: the things that remain are not made with hands, having God himſelf for the builder and maker of them; and are eternal in the heavens; and ſo they cannot be ſhaken.

3. The things removed were moveable, if we conſider the end of their make, and the purpoſe for which they were made. They were made as a figure for the time then preſent, and as patterns of the heavenly things, that now take place; but the things that remain are the things prefigured by them; and ſo it behoved the ſhadows of good things to come to give place to the good things themſelves, or the very image of them, Heb. ix. & x.

SECT. VI.

IN ℣ 28. we have the application of all this: "Wherefore "we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us "have grace," (or rather, hold the grace) "whereby we may "ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

The Apoſtle here tells us, that this is the great product of this ſhaking of the heaven and the earth, and this is what is come out of it to us; we have received an immoveable kingdom.

He deſigns this new ſtate of things *a kingdom*; and this deſignation is common to that which is removed, and to this: for by the ſhaking of the earth, Iſrael after the fleſh became the kingdom of God; and by the ſhaking of the earth, and alſo heaven, the kingdom of God being taken from them, the true Iſrael are God's kingdom, which being prefigured by the former, goes under the ſame name. This new ſtate of the church is ſet forth both in the Old Teſtament and the New under the notion of a kingdom. Thus it is moſt frequently repreſented in the writings of the prophets, and after the promiſe to David, it was ſtill expected by the ſaints under this notion. When our Lord came, the Jews were full of expectations and inquiries about the kingdom of God that ſhould come. John Baptiſt, and the Lord himſelf, in his miniſtry on earth, made conſtant uſe of this ſame deſignation; only, as we have noticed, they corrected the error of the Jews, by calling it *the kingdom of heaven*; and this was the

great ſubject of their preaching: "The kingdom of heaven "is at hand." The goſpel is deſigned *the goſpel of the kingdom*; and they that preached the goſpel, after our Lord's aſcenſion, and the down-pouring of the Spirit, preached "the "things concerning the kingdom of God." Acts viii. 12. and xx. 25. and xxviii. 31. So that this is the moſt notour and common deſignation of this new ſtate of things, a ſacred notion of the New-Teſtament church, the antitype of the Old; and it ought to be more inſiſted on by them that preach the goſpel, if they would copy after the firſt preachers, and if they would indeed preach the goſpel of the kingdom, than ordinarily it is now, when the ancient knowledge of this myſtery of Chriſt ſeems almoſt extinct.

Truly the New-Teſtament church fully anſwers this deſignation. Here is the king, the mighty one, on whom our help is laid, choſen out of the people; their glorious one of themſelves, their governor proceeding from the midſt of them, and with whom none among the ſons of the mighty can be compared. Here are the beſt ſubjects, glorioufly united, and ſeparated from other people, Numb. xxiii. 9. and an order and government infinitely excelling that of all other kingdoms; abſolute government without compulſion or oppreſſion; perfect liberty, and a willing people, without any confuſion or diſorder; a government of rich grace, reigning through righteouſneſs unto eternal life; unparallellable laws, written on the hearts of the ſubjects; and moſt righteous judgment, rendering unto every one according to his works. Here is glorious power, for the defence, and for the enlargement of the kingdom, and for the deſtruction of its enemies, Pſal. cx. lxviii. 17. 18. This is the King againſt whom there is no riſing up with ſucceſs: "The enemy ſhall not exact "upon him, nor the ſon of miſchief wrong him." See Iſ. xxxiii. 20.—24.

This is the kingdom of God; his peculiar treaſure, his portion and inheritance. Here, and no where elſe, is he known and enjoyed; here only has he cordial ſubjects; and here it is only that he is worſhipped and ſerved according to his mind and will in his holy place: "Why do ye leap, ye high "mountains? This is the hill which God deſireth to dwell "in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever. God is in his "holy place, as in Sinai; let us hold the grace, whereby "we may ſerve him with reverence and godly fear."

This is the Father's kingdom; and all his people, the bre-

thren

thren of his dear Son, their brother-ranſomer, are his children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt Jeſus.

But we do not yet ſee the glory of this kingdom, which muſt be hid from the world, till the new Jeruſalem come down from heaven at the ſecond coming of Jeſus Chriſt; we only believe the holy catholic church. And why is it that we affect a temporal kingdom of God, but becauſe we abide not in the lively faith of this glorious inviſible kingdom, and mind not heavenly things, nor converſe in heaven as we ought? By this means came the earthly kingdom of Antichriſt, where we have the uniformity of the letter, inſtead of the unity of the faith, and the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace; human authority with tyrannical and worldly power, inſtead of the authority and ſpiritual and heavenly power of the Lord Jeſus; and worldly ſplendor and glory, a worldly inheritance, inſtead of the ſpiritual glory of the kingdom of Chriſt, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints. "Up, make us gods," ſaid they; "for as for "this Moſes, we know not what is become of him." And then of this myſtery of iniquity, ſet up inſtead of, and in oppoſition unto the myſtery of the kingdom of heaven, it was ſaid, "This is the holy catholic church;" and the men of this world bow down to this idol, and worſhip it. But the Lord of the church will utterly deſtroy this idol, and every thing that remains of it in the earth, by the brightneſs of his glorious ſecond coming, when the holy catholic church ſhall appear, and this after he has conſumed and waſted that abomination with the ſpirit of his mouth, in the goſpel of the kindom.

Now, the Apoſtle infers from what he had before ſaid, that this kingdom cannot be moved; and ſo it excels the old in all thoſe reſpects wherein it is immoveable. It is eaſy to perceive, by what has been already ſaid, that it cannot be moved; and further, it is plain, that a kingdom ſet up by God, for the deſtruction of all its enemies, and unto the advantage of which he is making all things, even the oppoſition of enemies, to work together, "can never be moved." A kingdom founded in redemption from the curſe of God, and where his mercy that endureth for ever, his grace that faileth never, reigns unto eternal life, and that hath its ſeat in heaven, can never be moved by any oppoſition from any quarter, or any evil within itſelf. And truly, there is nothing certain, nothing ſafe, but in this kingdom.

The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of himſelf, and other New-Teſtament

ment believers in his day, ſays of this kingdom, " We have " received it ;". as he had ſaid, ℣ 22. " Ye are come unto " Mount Zion," &c. And this is the advantage that New-Teſtament believers have by this ſhaking of the earth, and alſo heaven. John the Baptiſt ſaid of this kingdom, in his miniſtry, " It is at hand ;" and while our Lord ſaid the ſame thing, he told, that there were ſome there " that ſhould not " taſte death, till they ſaw the Son of man coming in his " kingdom," or the kingdom of God coming with power, Matth. xvi. 28. Mark ix. 1. They ſaw this, after the Lord aſcended, and poured out the Holy Ghoſt ; and then they began to preach of it after this manner: " Therefore, " being by the right hand of God exalted, and having recei- " ved of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath " ſhed forth this, which ye now ſee and hear. For David " is not aſcended into the heavens, (*i. e.* with his body, as " Jeſus did) ; but he ſaith himſelf, The Lord ſaid unto my " Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy " footſtool. Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſu- " redly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus whom ye have " crucified, both Lord and Chriſt." Acts ii. 33.—36. And thus this kingdom, ſpoken of long before by the prophets, and declared to be at hand by John Baptiſt, and by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf while on earth, was fairly ſet up, and took place, when he ſat down on his throne in heaven, and ſent his goſpel, with the Holy Ghoſt, from thence unto all nations, gathering the things on earth together with the things in heaven, into one in himſelf. John Baptiſt was more than a prophet, becauſe he had this to declare, " The kingdom of " heaven is at hand ;" but the leaſt of them that preach the goſpel of the kingdom, which the Apoſtle ſays " we have " now received," has greater things to declare than John the Baptiſt, and ſo is greater than he. This is our great privi- lege under the goſpel, that this kingdom is ſet up, and is daily increaſing. New-Teſtament believers have received this king- dom, and they are herein privileged far beyond the Old-Te- ſtament ſaints, who did not receive this glorious accompliſh- ment of the promiſes till it took place, and ſo were not made perfect without us. And however little we may reckon of this, through our blindneſs and inadvertency to it, yet the angels deſire to look into this " glory following the ſuffer- " ings of Chriſt," 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12.

For my part, I could not underſtand the Lord and his A- poſtles ſpeaking of this kingdom, and the glorious new ſtate of

of things, far excelling what was before. For, thought I, the Old-Teſtament ſaints were ſaved the ſame way as we, and they went to heaven when they died, even as New-Teſtament ſaints; the covenant of grace was ſtill the ſame; and all the difference between the Old and New Teſtament is only in ſome circumſtances: how then do the apoſtles make ſuch a world's wonder of the excellency of this new ſtate of things, and of the great happineſs of living under it, and having a part in it? But when it pleaſed the Lord, by ſeveral means, to open the ſcriptures, and thereby lead me into ſome notion at leaſt of what I have been hitherto attempting to declare, I came to find, that (whatever was the happineſs of the Old-Teſtament ſaints in heaven before Chriſt came, and though there was never any eternal ſalvation for ſinners but of free grace through Jeſus Chriſt, and by faith in him), there is a greater difference betwixt the New Teſtament and the Old than I apprehended, and that our Lord and his apoſtles are far from ſpeaking hyperbolically, in declaring the exceeding glory of the New-Teſtament ſtate of things above all that took place in the world before; and that every ſcribe inſtructed in the kingdom of God, has glorious new things to bring out of his treaſure, as well as old. Yet, after all that has been hitherto ſaid, ſome, no doubt, may ſee but little ground for reckoning much upon the glorious things God hath done in the latter days; and may be looking on the things ſaid as airy notions, perhaps afraid of them, and thinking within themſelves, "Oh that our faith were like the "faith of the Old-Teſtament ſaints!" They do well to imitate their faith; for it is propoſed to us as a pattern to follow; "but ſtill looking to Jeſus, the author and finiſher "of our faith, who, for the joy that was ſet before him, en-"dured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at "the right hand of the throne of God." God has revealed nothing in vain; and what he ſeems to make much of, we muſt not deſpiſe. And if there be any difference betwixt things hid in God and manifeſted, betwixt a type and the thing typified, betwixt a promiſe and the accompliſhment of that promiſe, there muſt be ſuch a difference betwixt this new ſtate of things and what was before: and if the accompliſhment of a promiſe have things in it which were not while the promiſe was not accompliſhed, there muſt be new things, even a new kingdom here. Yet becauſe many can ſee no ſatisfying accompliſhment of the prophecies in the times of refreſhing, which commenced upon Chriſt's aſcenſion, and his coming

coming in the goſpel, and are to iſſue in the times of reſtitution of all things, at his ſecond coming; and becauſe they cannot ſee the new things of the kingdom of God, which were not before Chriſt deſcended into the lower parts of the earth, and aſcended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; it will not be amiſs, therefore, to put them in mind of ſome things further to ſatisfy them in this point. As,

1. God is manifeſted in this New Teſtament church and kingdom, as he was never before, John i. 18. Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. God is repreſented to the creatures no way to the diſadvantage in the "Word made fleſh," the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon. All the diſcoveries were imperfect before the expreſs image of his perſon was exhibited.

This ſame New-Teſtament church diſcovers ſomething that was hid in God from the beginning of the world, not from men only, but from the angels, Eph. iii. 9. 10. It is no diſparagement to the Old-Teſtament ſaints, or their happineſs in heaven before Chriſt came, to ſay, that there was ſomething hid from them which the angels themſelves knew not: "For "unto the angels in heavenly places is now known, by the "church, the manifold wiſdom of God." Now God's great counſels are laid open to them; they now ſee the end of the creating the worlds, and of the entrance of ſin, and of their preſervation from falling, and of the tranſlating the Old-Teſtament ſaints into heaven among them; and of all the promiſes, types, and ſhadows of the Old Teſtament; and the myſtery of his whole procedure from the foundation of the world unfolded, and new wonders of wiſdom expoſed to them, which they had no thought of before. All this is made known to them by the church, even this ſame church that we reckon ſo little upon. Blind thoughtleſs creatures are we, that are called to the knowledge of this church, and profeſs to believe it, and yet ſee no form or comelineſs in it, beyond what was in the world before it was: and yet the angels deſire to pry into it, and, as it were, go to ſchool again, to learn ſomething of God they knew not before. They had ſtudied the works of creation and providence before; they had inquired into all the promiſes and types of the Old Teſtament, and conſidered whatever prefigurations or preparations for this ſtate of things were in the heavens before; but, like children looking to a wiſe workman gathering materials, making preparations, and addreſſing himſelf to ſome notable piece of workmanſhip, they wondered what it ſhould

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come to at the length. Now here they ſee it in the church; yea, and they are obliged to the Son of man for new leſſons in the church, which they never learned before. The Son of man, Chriſt Jeſus, knows more of God than ever man or angel knew; even the ſoul of Jeſus Chriſt is filled with wiſdom very far above angels, and therefore he makes that gradation, Mark xiii. 32.—"Of that hour knoweth no man, "no not the angels, —neither the Son." This knowledge of God that is in the church, is firſt communicate to the ſoul of the Son of man, and from him to angels and men; neither can they know any thing of God but what was known before, except this way. This then is the teacher of angels as well as of men; and this his church is his ſchool. The angels are not aſhamed to own themſelves his ſcholars here, Rev. xix. 10. and compare Rev. i. 1. with xxii. 9.

That of God which is made known in this kingdom, as it was never before, is eſpecially his grace; therefore the Apoſtle, when ſpeaking of this kingdom that we have received, ſays, "Let us hold the grace." To clear this, let us conſider, 1. The ſtate of things before the entrance of ſin. 2. From thence to the ſetting up of this kingdom.

As to the firſt of theſe: 1. Whatever diſcoveries of God's goodneſs were in that ſtate, yet there was no ſuch condeſcenſion of God towards the creatures, as in the perſon and mediation of Emmanuel, God with us. 2. Neither was there any full repreſentation of his love in a fruit like itſelf. He gave many things, but not his Son, in that firſt ſtate; but now "God ſo loved the world, he gave his Son;" a fruit of his love equal to itſelf! 3. There was no diſcovery of pardoning mercy in that ſtate of things; not the leaſt evidence of it. But here it reigns, through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, unto eternal life, and all the glory of God ſhines here. 4. There was no preſerving grace belonging unto that ſtate of things; and therefore both angels and men fell. As to the preſervation of the angels that ſtood, that was not owing unto the ſtate wherein they were made, but unto their election of ſovereign grace unto this kingdom; and that grace is the grace of this kingdom.

Next, If we conſider the ſtate of things after the fall, before Chriſt came, under the Old Teſtament, we ſhall ſee that this kingdom excels in this reſpect, of a diſcovery of God's grace. For, 1. Then this grace was only foreſhewed in dark promiſes and types, not yet fully exhibited. True, the ſaints were ſaved in believing it; but they believed it to

come afterward: "They died in faith, not having received "the promiſes; but ſaw them afar off, and were perſuaded "of them, and embraced them." All the grace they enjoyed was the fruit of their election unto this kingdom, and was their preparation for it: ſo it was the grace of this kingdom, like a few drops of rain before a full ſhower. This grace, foreſhewed and foretaſted by Old-Teſtament ſaints, was much vailed, not only in the types, but in the promiſes and prophecies of it: ſo that the "prophets themſelves in-"quired what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt, "which was in them, did ſignify, when it told beforehand "the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow." Conſider 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12. The light that ſhines in the New Teſtament has given unto New-Teſtament believers more underſtanding of the promiſes and prophecies than the prophets themſelves had. Moſes's law, with all the prefigurations it had of this grace, was a vail over it; ſo that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed: "But we all, with open face, behold, as "in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord." And theſe dark aforehand diſcoveries of the grace of God were incloſed in narrow bounds; firſt, in the families of the patriarchs, then in the nation of Iſrael: but now "the grace of God that bringeth "ſalvation, hath appeared unto all men," all nations. See Eph. ii. from ℣ 12. Then it was whiſpered in a corner, now it is proclaimed to every creature, Rom. xvi. 25. 26.

2. If we conſider the Old Teſtament, and the ſtate of things under it, in themſelves, and abſtract from the promiſes of this grace, and the typical reference they had unto this grace; there we have the miniſtration of death, but here the miniſtration of righteouſneſs and of the Spirit. There was bondage and fear; here is liberty, and love, and lively hope. There they were held at a diſtance; here there is acceſs into the holieſt by the ſpirit of adoption, and boldneſs and confidence by the faith of Chriſt. In a word, the law given by Moſes miniſtered and wrought wrath, but grace came by Jeſus Chriſt: The law had the promiſes and ſhadows of grace, but the truth of theſe came by Jeſus Chriſt, John i. 17. "Now "hath God ſaved us, and called us with a holy calling, ac-"cording to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given us "in Chriſt before the world began, but is now made mani-"feſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who "hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to "light through the goſpel." 2 Tim. i. 9. 10.

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2. There was never ſuch union and communion between God and the creatures in the world before, as in this kingdom. Now God's nature and ours is wonderfully met in the perſon of the Son of God, the King of this kingdom. This was not till Chriſt came; neither was the Holy Ghoſt dwelling in the Son of man, as the head, and in all his people, as the members of his myſtical body. For however the Old-Teſtament ſaints were prepared for this, by the Spirit of Chriſt in them beforehand, yet they could not be thus united to the "Word made fleſh," the "Firſt-born from the dead", the "Head of the body, the church," Eph. i. 19.—23. Col. i. 18. 19. Our Lord propoſes this wonderful new thing to his diſciples for their encouragement, when about to leave them, John xiv. 17.—20. Speaking of the Holy Ghoſt, he ſaith, "He dwelleth in you;" and further promiſes, "He ſhall be "in you, and I will come unto you. The world ſeeth me no "more, but ye ſee me; becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo. At "that day ye ſhall know that I am in my Father, and you in "me, and I in you."

3. God was never ſo worſhipped in the world before, as he is in this kingdom. While the creatures were perfect, they glorified God to their power; but all the creatures put together, could not, by any performance of worſhip, fully glorify him. They came infinitely ſhort of this: and as there were ſome of his attributes not known to them, particularly pardoning mercy; ſo he had not the glory of it from them: neither was his vindictive juſtice glorified in that ſtate of things to purpoſe. But God would have the glory of theſe attributes, and he will be perfectly worſhipped and glorified. This could not be by mere creatures, nor could it be but by a ſin-offering; therefore ſin muſt enter into the world, or God cannot be thus worſhipped and glorified in the world. From the entrance of ſin, God was not worſhipped among men, but by ſacrifices and offerings for ſin: but, alas! the ſacrifices of beaſts, men, or angels, could never fully glorify God's juſtice, mercy, and all his other attributes; he would never have appointed ſuch ſacrifices, but with a view to a better that ſhould follow. "In burnt-offerings and ſacrifices "for ſin he had no pleaſure. But then, in the fulneſs of "time, the Son of God came, the high prieſt and ſacrifice "of God's providing." He hath glorified God by preſenting unto him an offering for ſin, whereby the juſtice and mercy of God, and all his other attributes, are glorified to the full. Was there ever a worſhipper like this in the world before, or

ſuch a high prieſt as Jeſus the Son of God? "Now every "high prieſt is ordained to offer gifts and ſacrifices: where- "fore it is of neceſſity that this man have ſomewhat alſo to "offer," Heb. viii. 3.; and that is the ſacrifice of himſelf, his own blood, wherewith he hath entered into the true holy place, heaven itſelf, there to preſent it continually before the Father, as the miniſter of the ſanctuary and the true tabernacle. This ſacrifice, once offered, and the blood of it brought into the holy place, and preſented before the throne, glorifies God infinitely and fully; becauſe it is the ſacrifice of the Son himſelf, his own blood, the blood of God. "Burnt-offering and ſacrifices thou wouldſt not; then ſaid I, "Lo, I come." There is ſomething worth the noticing in that *I*, repeated with a *Behold*. The ſtreſs of the whole leans there; God, that found himſelf not ſuitably worſhipped, not fully glorified, in all the ſin-offerings, for want of worth in them, is pleaſed in this *I*: "This is my beloved Son, "in him I am well pleaſed." See Jer. xxx. 21. This *I* is the Father's equal, partaker with him in the ſame Godhead, "the man his fellow," that was in the form of God, and took on him the form of a ſervant, for this purpoſe. Here is a divine worſhipper then, and divine worſhip performed, and given to the Father by Jeſus Chriſt, preſenting before him this his offering, and God is fully glorified by the blood of God.

This is the worſhip given unto God in the name of the whole church, Heb. ii. 12. and God is infinitely pleaſed in it. All the church in heaven and earth behold it, and cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain;" for what is our worſhip, but an acknowledgment of, and concurrence with this moſt perfect worſhip given to the Father by Jeſus Chriſt? God takes no pleaſure in any worſhip where this God-glorifying offering is not acknowledged. The high prieſts on earth went into the holieſt with their offering, bearing on their breaſt and ſhoulders, or arms, the names of the tribes ingraven with the ingravings of a ſignet: But, Oh, to be ſet as a ſeal in the heart, as a ſeal on the arm of this high prieſt, appearing in the preſence of God for his people, and worſhipping in their name. This was a good thing to come of old; now it is come; let us improve it. "Let us come "boldly to a throne of grace, to obtain mercy, and find "grace to help us in the time of need. Bring no more vain "oblations." Acknowledge the oblation made. "Offer "unto God thankſgiving" for what is done. And we muſt

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alſo know, that this is a moſt awful thing: Here the divine glory and majeſty ſhines in its ſtrength. When we ſerve him acceptably, holding this grace, it muſt be with reverence and godly fear: "O worſhip the Lord in the beauty of ho-"lineſs: Fear before him all the earth."

4. There was never ſuch a ſociety before in the world as is this kingdom. Of this incomparable ſociety we have ſome account, Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24.; and we have ſomething of it, Col. i. 20. But, in the epiſtle to the Epheſians, which ſeems deſigned to give an account of the excellency of the New-Teſtament church, we have this thing much extolled by the Apoſtle. He uſes ſeveral ſimilitudes to ſet it forth; he calls it a *city*, wherein we are fellow-citizens, chap. ii. 19. And to this agrees what is ſaid, Heb. xii. 22. "Ye are "come to the city of the living God." And Phil. iii. 20. "Our converſation," or citizenſhip, "is in heaven." He calls it a *houſehold*, a *family*; the whole family in heaven and in earth, chap. ii. 19. and iii. 15. He calls it a *body*, chap. iii. 6. and iv. particularly ℣ 16. and i. 23. He calls it a *building*, a *temple*, chap. ii. 20. 21. "And are built upon "the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt "himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, in whom all the "building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy tem-"ple in the Lord." And chap. iii. 16.—19. He prays for believers, that they may be "ſtrengthened with all might by "the Spirit in the inner man;" that "Chriſt may dwell in "their hearts by faith," and that "they may be rooted "and grounded in love;" for this purpoſe, that ſo they may be able to have a true proſpect of, and take up rightly the dimenſions of this glorious ſpiritual building: "That he "may be able to comprehend with all ſaints, what is the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height." And he tells us what advantage they ſhould have thereby: "So they "ſhall know the love of Chriſt that paſſes knowledge, and "be filled with all the fulneſs of God." So great a matter did the Apoſtle, yea the Spirit of Chriſt in him, make the underſtanding of this glorious thing. And, chap. i. 8. 9. 10. he magnifies the grace of God much in making known the myſtery of it to them: "He hath abounded toward us in "all wiſdom and prudence: having made known unto us the "myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which "he hath purpoſed in himſelf." And what myſtery of his will can this be? Even this, "That, in the diſpenſation of the "fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one" (or ga-

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ther again in one head) "all things in Chriſt, both which are "in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." There is a wonderful aſſociation, or rather union, of different things here, that were ſeparated, but never united after this manner before. God and the creature, angels and the ſpirits of juſt men in heaven; again, heaven and earth; and on earth, Jews and Gentiles, and they of all nations, all ranks, conditions, and ſexes, are all joined in one in Chriſt Jeſus, the Son of man, who is the Son of God. This is a moſt glorious ſociety for number; and when it appears at the laſt day, all the promiſes and types of it, in this reſpect, will be found fully verified in it. They are gathered in one in Chriſt, even in him. This muſt be peculiarly noticed, becauſe ſo repeated. There was never ſuch a bond of union, ſuch an uniting head, in any ſociety in the world before, as this is. In him all the members ſtand in the neareſt manner united to one another, and to God, John xvii. 21. 23. 1 Cor. xii. 12. 13. And this wonderful union is moſt firm and everlaſting. It is impoſſible that it ſhould be by any means diſſolved: "On "this rock will I build my church." There had been an union and peace among the creatures before, but it was diſſolved by the entrance of ſin. God has now ſettled this ſociety and its union upon an everlaſting foundation. The things in heaven and earth are united together here in the moſt holy manner; the bond of union is divine. In him alſo they ſit together in heavenly places, Eph. ii. 6. There was never ſuch a ſociety as this in the world before. "Jeſus aſcended "far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." This was reſerved "unto the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times," as the Apoſtle ſays. And in this all God's great counſels and deſigns concerning all his works whatſoever do terminate. The head of this body the church, is head over all things unto it, even as all things were before made by him, and for him, Eph. i. 22. 23. Col. i. 16.—20.

5. There was never ſuch an inheritance in the world before, as that which the Father gave to Jeſus Chriſt his Son, when he ſet him at his own right hand in heavenly places; and in this inheritance his people in heaven and earth are joint heirs with him, who purchaſed it by his own blood, Rom. viii. 17. Gal. iv. 7. Eph. i. 11.—18. The eyes of our underſtandings muſt be enlightened by the Spirit, if we would know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints. The glory beſtowed on the Son of man, the head of the church, and the fulneſs given to him

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in poſſeſſion, when he aſcended to the Father's right hand, is ſuch as was never given to any before: and this is the inheritance of the New-Teſtament church, of which believers have the earneſt and firſt-fruits here, while they ſee him "by faith "whom the world cannot ſee," John xvi. 14. 15. Yet they "live by faith, not by ſight." But "when Chriſt, with "whom their life is now hid, ſhall appear, then ſhall they "appear with him in glory."

There can be no queſtion but it was an addition to the happineſs and glory of thoſe in heaven, when they began to partake with the Son of man, Chriſt Jeſus, in that fulneſs beſtowed on him, however great their happineſs was there before, while they were there, as Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, dwelling in Canaan, the land of promiſe, but not yet poſſeſſing the inheritance. Thus the inheritance of this kingdom is a new thing excelling all that was before.

6. That holy Spirit of promiſe wherewith believers are ſealed in Chriſt, which is the earneſt of their inheritance, even the Spirit of adoption, the Comforter, ſeems to be another new thing in this kingdom, and peculiar to New-Teſtament believers; as theſe ſcriptures ſeem plainly to declare: John vii. 38. 39. "He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture "hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water. "But this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on "him ſhould receive: for the Holy Ghoſt was not yet gi-"ven, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified." John xvi. 7. "Nevertheleſs, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you "that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will "not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto "you." Acts i. 4. 5. "And being aſſembled together with "them, commanded them, that they ſhould not depart "from Jeruſalem, but wait for the promiſe of the Father, "which, ſaith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly "baptized with water; but ye ſhall be baptized with the "Holy Ghoſt not many days hence." Acts ii. 33 "There-"fore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having "received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he "hath ſhed forth this, which ye now ſee and hear." Acts xv. 8. 9. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them "witneſs, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, even as he did unto "us; and put no difference betwixt us and them, purifying "their hearts by faith." Acts xix. 2. 3. "He ſaid unto "them, Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed? "And they ſaid unto him, We have not ſo much as heard "whether

" whether there be any Holy Ghoſt. And he ſaid unto them, " Unto what then were ye baptized? And they ſaid, Unto " John's Baptiſm." Rom. viii. 15. 16. 17. 23. " For ye " have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but " ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, " Abba, Father. The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our " ſpirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, " then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt: if " ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glori- " fied together.——Ourſelves alſo, which have the firſt-fruits " of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, " waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our " body." 2 Cor. i. 21. 22. " Now he which ſtabliſheth us " with you in Chriſt, and hath anointed us, is God; who " hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in " our hearts." Gal. iii. 13. 14. " Chriſt hath redeemed us " from the curſe of the law,—that the bleſſing of Abraham " might come on the Gentiles, through Jeſus Chriſt; that we " might receive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith." Gal. iv. 3.—6. " Even ſo, when we were children, we were in bond- " age under the elements of the world; but when the fulneſs " of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a " woman, made under the law, that we might receive the " adoption of ſons. And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath " ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, " Abba, Father." Eph. i. 13. 14. " In whom ye alſo truſt- " ed, after that ye heard the word of truth, the goſpel of " your ſalvation: in whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye " were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the " earneſt of our inheritance, until the redemption of the pur- " chaſed poſſeſſion, unto the praiſe of his glory."

Theſe are ſome inſtances of the excellent new things of this glorious kingdom; which being duly conſidered, with what has been before ſaid, may ſatisfy us, that it was not unworthy of God to ſpeak ſo much of it by the prophets, and to repreſent it beforehand in ſo many figures. And if neither the preſent ſtate of this kingdom, nor the glorious perfection and manifeſtation of it " in the times of reſtitution " of all things," which are to take place at our Lord's ſe- cond coming, will ſatisfy us, as to the accompliſhment of the prophecies concerning the glory of this kingdom, I know not what will ſatisfy us, if it be not that temporal kingdom, which the Jews have been looking for in their unbelief and hardneſs of heart, and in their oppoſition to the kingdom of

our Lord Jeſus; but it ought to be moſt firmly believed among Chriſtians, that they ſhall be aſhamed of theſe their expectations. They deſpiſed the kingdom of God which they had of old; and now, when that is done away, and the kingdom of heaven is come, they affect that old kingdom much, and exceedingly deſpiſe this; and while they are ſo affected, it is evident they cannot receive this kingdom of God, which is not of this world. But when the vail which is upon their hearts in the reading of the Old Teſtament is taken away, they will ſee the glory of this kingdom, and its excellency above that which is removed: ſo will they forget the earthly things, and ſeek the things that are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God; and, if they ſhall riſe with Chriſt from that death under which they lie, they will be dead to this world, and have their life hid with Chriſt in God, not to appear, till he appear, and they with him in glory, Col. iii. 1.—4.

And thus far we have been conſidering the import of our Lord's expreſſion, "Now is my kingdom not from hence; "my kingdom is not of this world." We ſhall next ſee how he manifeſts to Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world.

CHAP. III.

Of the diſtinction betwixt the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of Chriſt.

WE have heard how our Lord confeſſed himſelf to be the King promiſed to the Jews, and owned his kingdom before Pilate; and we have alſo heard his teſtimony concerning the nature of his kingdom, as not now of this world, and ſo quite diſtinct from that which his accuſers were looking for. By this his teſtimony it is evident, that the charge brought againſt him, of being againſt Cæſar, by making himſelf a king, was altogether without foundation. But further, he demonſtrates to Pilate, that his kingdom in the world is not a worldly kingdom, and ſo does not interfere with Cæſar's kingdom, when he ſays, "If my kingdom were "of this world, then would my ſervants fight, that I ſhould "not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not "from hence."

It was a fact that might be plain to the obſervation of

Pilate and the Jews, that he did not allow his ſervants to fight to defend him from the Jews.

It is true, he had ſignified to his diſciples, that they would be in ſuch circumſtances as wherein they would ſtand in extreme need of this ſort of defence; and had ſaid to them, "He that hath no ſword, let him ſell his garment, and buy "one," Luke xxii. 36. Yet, while they ſtood in the greateſt need of ſelling their garments to buy ſwords, before the Emperor turned Chriſtian, they did not reckon that theſe words of the Lord were intended to oblige them to take the ſword for their defence in their profeſſion: For when the diſciples anſwered Chriſt, ſaying, "Here are two ſwords," he ſaid unto them, "It is enough;" ſurely not for eleven diſciples; but it was enough for his purpoſe, which was to give occaſion, *firſt*, for the "miracle of healing Malchus's "ear," wherein he gave a notable evidence of his good-will to his enemies, and that he was able to deliver himſelf, but condeſcended to ſuffer; and a notable pattern to his people, of doing acts of kindneſs to enemies, and of patience in ſuffering; and, *ſecondly*, for the following prohibition of drawing the ſword in his quarrel; for, when he healed the ear, he ſaid to his enemies, "Suffer ye thus far," Luke xxii. 51.; and to Peter, Matth. xxvi. 52. "Put up again thy ſword into his place; "for all they that take the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword." He ſpeaks there of another ſort of defence, more agreeable to the nature of his heavenly kingdom, than the ſword of his diſciples, which he would have uſed rather, if it had not been unſuitable to his preſent condition, and againſt the fulfilment of the ſcripture, ℣ 53. 54. "Thinkeſt thou that I cannot "now pray to my Father, and he ſhall preſently give me "more than twelve legions of angels? But how then ſhall "the ſcriptures be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be?" There is no need of the ſword of the diſciples to defend the kingdom of heaven; the armies of angels are more ſuitable to this kingdom than armies of fighting men.

After this diſcharge of the ſword, we have no commandment to Chriſt's diſciples to take the ſword to fight for his kingdom, nor any encouragement to expect his concurrence, or look for ſucceſs in that way; but rather the contrary. For as he ſays to Peter, "All that take the ſword, ſhall periſh by "the ſword;" ſo this is upon the matter repeated, Rev. xiii. 10. "He that leadeth into captivity, ſhall go into captivity; "he that killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword. "Here is the patience and the faith of the ſaints." Where,

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it ſeems, the good fight of faith and patience is oppoſed to the fight which is by the ſword. This threatening, with reſpect to the diſciples and ſaints of Jeſus their taking the ſword, for the defence of his kingdom, has been verified in many inſtances. We need not go farther than this ſame land. The diſciples of Chriſt here took the ſword, and openly profeſſed it was for the defence of Chriſt's kingdom; but they went into captivity, and were killed, firſt by the ſword of Montroſe, (whereby the land alſo ſuffered for the perjury immediately going before), next by the ſword of Cromwell, and then by the ſword of Charles II. and the Biſhops; neither was it by their own ſword that they were at length delivered. The Lord owned as many of his truths and ways as they contended for, and them in adhering to them unto death; but not their miſtakes, nor their way of fighting with the ſword. The earth hath helped the woman in many inſtances againſt Antichriſt ſince the reformation, ſwallowing up the flood of perſecution, caſt out of the mouth of the dragon; but the earth and the woman are two very diſtinct things.

However, it was a plain fact, that our Lord did not allow his ſervants to fight to defend him from the Jews; and hereby he manifeſts, "that his kingdom is not of this world." To this purpoſe he gives an account of a kingdom of this world, and deſcribes it by that without which it cannot be; and that is ſelf-defence by worldly power.

As the kingdoms of the world took their firſt riſe from the neceſſity of aſſociations for this defence, ſo it is impoſſible, in the nature of the thing, that they can be, or ſtand without it. Though a kingdom might be ſuppoſed without breaking in upon other kingdoms, yet no kingdom can be without power to defend itſelf from outward attacks by the ſword, and from evils ariſing within itſelf: ſo that our Lord's account of a kingdom of this world is moſt juſt, as it is alſo the fitteſt that could be for his preſent purpoſe.

And here he eſtabliſhes the natural principle of ſelf-defence in the kingdoms of this world. His ſubjects on this earth are members of thoſe ſocieties that have power to defend themſelves by the ſword, and he has allowed them to do their duty in their ſtations and callings in them, and his grace will make them more faithful and conſcientious in the duties of their ſtations and callings in thoſe kingdoms.

As violence offered to the conſciences of men is one of the greateſt injuries, ſo, in all aſſociations for defence by the ſword, this ought to be attended to, and all men have a

right of defence in the kingdoms of this world from violence offered to their conſciences in matters of religion. This right is by no means refuſed to thoſe kingdoms by the Lord Chriſt. Antichriſt is the great invader of the liberty of mankind in this matter. He is furniſhed with worldly power, and he uſes it unto this purpoſe. Where he prevails, tyranny, as in other reſpects, ſo eſpecially in this, hath taken place, and men are inſlaved this way; but, in Proteſtant kingdoms and commonwealths, there is ſome more freedom, and the ſubjects of Chriſt enjoy that liberty in common with others in thoſe kingdoms where this natural right of mankind is in any meaſure defended. Thus far has the earth helped the woman: and this is properly the Proteſtant cauſe, ſo far as the ſword and the power of the kingdoms of this world is concerned in it. And upon this ground ſtands the revolution fully warranted, as it concerns religion.

And this is the common cauſe of mankind, according to the firſt riſe and reaſon of the kingdoms of this world.

Now, from the account our Lord gives of a worldly kingdom, he demonſtrates that his kingdom is not of this world, and therefore does not interfere with Cæſar's; for ſince he did not allow his ſervants to fight for his defence, and ſo had ſet aſide that without which no kingdom of this world can be, it is evident his kingdom cannot be of this world. And he plainly intimates, that his kingdom is of ſuch a nature, that it does not admit of that kind of defence: "My ſervants "would fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews: "but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Some think this is to be confined to his preſent circumſtances, when he was only laying the foundation of his kingdom, in his ſufferings; and that becauſe he came into the world to ſuffer for his people, who could not be redeemed without his ſufferings; and to fulfil the prophecies concerning his ſufferings, it behoved him to ſuffer. But they reckon the caſe is not ſo now with his ſubjects, ſince his kingdom is ſet up in the world. They may now aſſociate themſelves to defend his truths and inſtitutions, and to defend one another in their profeſſion of them, by all the power of this world that they have or can attain unto. And ſo ſhould I think if it were not for the following reaſons.

1. Our Lord does not here give his preſent circumſtances as the reaſon of his not allowing his ſervants to fight for defending him, but the nature of his kingdom; or, if he draws an inference from this matter of fact, to ſhew the nature of his

his kingdom, this his inference is made void by this account of the thing. If our Lord had given the leaſt intimation of this to Pilate, or if Pilate had taken the leaſt ſuſpicion of this from his words, he would have been apprehenſive of his kingdom, and found fault in him; which yet he did not. It is true, he ſays, "Now is my kingdom not from hence." But this *now*, as has been ſaid, refers to the ſtate of God's kingdom before this in Iſrael, and is plainly oppoſed to it, importing the great change now a-making in that point. And when our Lord is making an account of his kingdom to Pilate, is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he ſpeaks of it only in that time, when he was but laying the foundations of it, and when it was not yet ſet up?

2. He calls his followers to imitate him in this very thing, "patient ſuffering." When he foretells his ſufferings and death, Matth. xvi. 21. Peter, who had made that excellent confeſſion concerning his perſon, yet affecting a temporal kingdom, and filled with that ſort of zeal, rebukes his maſter, ſaying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this ſhall not be unto "thee," ℣ 22. We do not read of a more ſharp rebuke given to his diſciples on any occaſion, than that which he gave to Peter at this time, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art "an offence unto me: for thou ſavoureſt not the things that "be of God, but thoſe that be of men." He minded earthly things, and ſo ſet himſelf againſt the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, the wiſdom of God, and the power of God, for the redemption and ſalvation of the church. But though his ſufferings were thus abſolutely neceſſary, and Peter far in the wrong to ſtand againſt them; yet this may be ſuppoſed to be far from his ſervants and followers; ſeeing the caſe is not the ſame with them as with him, whom it behoved to ſuffer for the redemption of the church. Our Lord deſtroys ſuch a ſuppoſition, by telling his diſciples, and all his followers, that they muſt be conformed to him their maſter and leader, in this point of ſuffering, and ſo deprives them of all hopes of a temporal kingdom, and lays a perpetual bar in the way of their minding earthly things. His followers, though they be not to ſuffer for the redemption of the world, yet they muſt be conformed to their leader, they muſt follow their crucified maſter, bearing their croſs after him, ℣ 24. 25. "Then ſaid "Jeſus unto his diſciples, If any man will come after me, "let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me. "For whoſoever will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it; and whoſo-"ever will loſe his life for my ſake, ſhall find it." Luke has it,

it, "Let him take up his croſs daily," chap. ix. 23. To the ſame purpoſe, ſays our Lord, when ſpeaking of his ſufferings for the ſalvation of his people, and for gathering them unto him, John xii. 23.—26. "He that loveth his life, ſhall loſe it; and "he that hateth his life in this world, ſhall keep it unto life "eternal. If any man ſerve me, let him follow me," *&c.* The true profeſſion of Chriſt's truths, and all his commands and inſtitutions, will always, one way or other, croſs our worldly intereſt: "For all that will live godly in him, muſt "ſuffer." And it is a vain thing to think to hold him and our worldly intereſt together: "No man can ſerve two ma-"ſters," 2 Tim. iii. 12. Rev. xii. 17.

This ſame Peter, that could not endure to hear of his maſter's ſufferings, tells us expreſsly, that Chriſt hath left all his people an example of patient ſuffering, and ſets before us that ſame very thing that ſome would make peculiar to our Lord, as a pattern to copy after, 1 Pet. ii. 19.—23. "For "this is thank-worthy, if a man for conſcience toward God "endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, "if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye ſhall take it "patiently? But if when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye "take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even "hereunto were ye called; becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for "us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps: "Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuf-"fered, he threatened not, but committed himſelf to him "that judgeth righteouſly." Thus he ſets forth Chriſt as a pattern, not only to ſlaves, as ſome conceive, but unto all his followers. And chap. iv. ℣ 1. he thus exhorts Chriſtians, "Foraſmuch then as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, "arm yourſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind." Here is armour for Chriſt's followers, inſtead of the ſword, which Peter himſelf once took when he was in no good condition for ſuffering: but now he ſays, "Arm yourſelves with the ſame "mind that Chriſt had, when he ſuffered for us in the fleſh."

Our Lord tells his diſciples, Matth. x. 16. "Behold, I ſend "you forth as ſheep in the midſt of wolves: be ye therefore "wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves." I have found this wiſdom of the ſerpent much inſiſted on, and our Lord's call to it much perverted, to patroniſe his followers in uſing that wiſdom of this world, as to which a man muſt become a fool, that he may be wiſe. But the harmleſsneſs of the dove, the Chriſtian meekneſs, and patience in ſuffering for the name

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of Chriſt, is leſs ſpoke of. He would have his followers to outſhine the men of this world, in bearing injuries, eſpecially in his cauſe; and calls them rather to prepare for more ſufferings, when they are injured, than to reſent injuries done them, under pretence of avoiding greater wrongs that may follow if they ſhould bear patiently, Matth. v. 38.—48. He does not allow his ſubjects to diſturb the kingdoms of this world, by taking the ſword to advance or defend his intereſt and kingdom in the world, but calls them to be ſubject to the powers that be, to "pay tribute" to them, "to pray for "them, and to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs "and honeſty," Matth. xxii. 21. and xvii. 24.—27. Rom. xiii. 1.—8. 1 Tim. ii. 1.—4. Tit. iii. 1. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 13.—17. And it has been obſerved, that the Chriſtians, while they were ſufferers, had no hand in the inſurrections that were in the Empire.

3. However much the diſciples affected a temporal kingdom before the Lord aſcended, Acts i. 6.; yet, after his aſcenſion, and the Holy Ghoſt's coming, they ſtudied conformity to him in this matter, and never attempted to take the ſword, either for promoting or defending his intereſt and kingdom in the world. And here we may obſerve a difference betwixt the Old-Teſtament kingdom and the New. Of old, the Spirit of God came upon his ſubjects, in that earthly ſtate of the church, to enable them to fight with the ſword againſt the enemies of that kingdom, to deſtroy them, and to defend the kingdom of God; and by a very few the Lord wrought great deliverances then, and deſtroyed vaſt numbers of men: "Gideon, Barak, Samſon, Jephthah, &c. through "faith ſubdued kingdoms, waxed valiant in fight, turned to "flight the armies of the aliens." But the apoſtles of Chriſt, though they had five thouſand men in Jeruſalem, Acts iv. 4. a greater number of men than thoſe by whom the Lord wrought great temporal deliverances of old, yet they never attempted to ſtir in that way, but ſubmitted patiently to ſuffer. And even when the captains and officers feared the people, leſt they ſhould have been ſtoned, and ſo were obliged to bring them without violence, they came peaceably. The church of Jeruſalem was then full of the Spirit of Chriſt, the people magnified them, and the power of the Spirit of God was remarkable in the great miracles done upon the bodies of men to heal their diſeaſes. If the Spirit had been given, as of old, to enable them to fight, or if it had been the will of Chriſt, that his kingdom ſhould be advanced or defended

fended in that way, they had men enow to defend themſelves againſt the Jews and the Romans; for the Lord ſaves "by few as well as many." And what was the hand of the Jews and Romans againſt the hand of the Lord, and his ſword in the hand of his people, as in the hand of Gideon of old? But Chriſt would not have his ſervants to fight for him, becauſe his kingdom was not now of this world. I queſtion not but the difference obſerved by Gamaliel, betwixt thoſe two men that aroſe with the ſword, who were deſtroyed, and whoſe followers were diſperſed, and the apoſtles of Chriſt, who had nothing of worldly power about them, and made no ſtir that way, was the thing that made him ſuſpect, that "this work was of God," and "could not be overthrown," Acts v. 26. 27. and 34.—39.

The Apoſtle inſinuates a difference in this point betwixt the New-Teſtament believers and the Old-Teſtament worthies, whom he brings in as witneſſes to the way of faith in Chriſt, and whom he would have us to imitate in their faith and patience, Heb. xi. and xii. from the beginning. For he ſays, "Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, "looking unto Jeſus, the author and finiſher of our faith; who, "for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, de-"ſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the "throne of God. For conſider him that endured ſuch con-"tradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be weary, and "faint in your minds. Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, "ſtriving againſt ſin." This is another race ſet before us, than that of "ſubduing kingdoms, waxing valiant in fight, and "putting to flight the armies of the aliens." This is the Chriſtian's fight, even the ſpiritual warfare againſt ſin in ourſelves, and in the world about us. This is the Chriſtian reſiſtance; even holding faſt the profeſſion of our faith unto the death, againſt all contradiction and terror that ſerves to move us to let it go. This is the Chriſtian hero, that is conformed to the Captain of ſalvation in bearing the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and enduring the contradiction of ſinners. And to this agrees that exhortation, Heb. xiii. 12. 13. 14. "Jeſus — that he might ſanctify the people with his own "blood, ſuffered without the gate. Let us go forth there-"fore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. "For here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek one to "come."

We have the Chriſtian warfare, ſuitable to the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, and altogether diſtinct from a worldly warfare,

fare, ſet forth, Eph. vi. from ℣ 10. to 20. Notice ℣ 12. and ſee the warfare of the firſt Chriſtians oppoſed unto a worldly warfare: "For we wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but a-"gainſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of "the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in "high places." And the armour unto this warfare is the armour of God, which the Apoſtle deſcribes. Here we have no other ſword but the ſword of the Spirit. The firſt Chriſtians uſed no other ſword but this, and withſtood their enemies, the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, with no other armour but this armour of God. In thoſe days, it was, in their eyes, the greateſt honour to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Chriſt, Acts v. 41. They did not then diſſemble or hide any part of the truth, for fear of ſuffering. They were not then filled with many contrivances of worldly wiſdom, to avoid perſecution, and to make to themſelves a great name in the earth. Then they ſaw a beauty in being conformed to Chriſt in his ſufferings, and they breathed vehemently after it, Phil. iii. 10. The Apoſtle calls as many as were duly inſtructed in the Chriſtian faith to be thus minded, in oppoſition to the Judaiſing teachers, who minded earthly things, ℣ 15. 17. 19. 20. Obedience to our Lord's command, Matth. v. 39. 40. 41. 44. and conformity to him in that point, was no ſtrange nor ridiculous thing then among Chriſtians, as it is now: 2 Cor. ii. 20. "For ye ſuffer if a man bring you "into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of "you, if a man exalt himſelf, if a man ſmite you on the "face."

4. A ſociety avouching Chriſt to be head and king of it, furniſhed with worldly power for defending his truths and inſtitutions, and aſſociated for defending his intereſt, and their profeſſion of ſubjection to him, by the ſword, is undoubtedly a kingdom of this world, by our Lord's deſcription of a kingdom of this world: for it agrees with our Lord's account of ſuch a kingdom, in that whereby it is diſtinguiſhed from his kingdom. Let it be what it will then, his kingdom it is not. And ſuch an aſſociation is plainly croſs to this teſtimony of our Lord concerning his kingdom.

But againſt all this it is ſaid, Is it not lawful to defend our natural and civil rights? And why not our religious rights too, ſince they are the moſt valuable? Or, though the firſt Chriſtians uſed not the ſword, when Chriſtianity was not a civil right, yet when it became ſo, by magiſtrates and whole nations their profeſſing Chriſtianity, may it not be defended even

as a civil right? *Anſ.* 1. How far religion is a natural and civil right, to be defended by the ſword in the kingdoms of this world, has been already declared. But that ſort of defence is the common right of mankind, and not peculiar to Chriſt's ſubjects. 2. It cannot be denied, that a defence of civil and natural rights in the kingdoms of this world is lawful and neceſſary; and they that have power, will defend their lives and fortunes by the ſword. But the truths and inſtitutions of Chriſt, and the privileges of his kingdom, which are not natural, nor civil and earthly, but ſpiritual, are not capable of ſuch a defence: they muſt be defended another way. 3. If there ſhould be a ſociety for defending the truths and inſtitutions of Chriſt, in the profeſſion of them, by the ſword; then theſe truths and inſtitutions would be thus laid in the conſtitution of that ſociety, which, by our Lord's deſcription of a worldly kingdom, is a kingdom of this world. But it is expreſsly contrary to this his confeſſion, that his truths and inſtitutions ſhould be in the conſtitution of a kingdom of this world. For thus that worldly ſociety or kingdom would be his kingdom, or his church: but he ſays, "My kingdom "is not of this world." 4. In ſuch an aſſociation of Chriſt's ſubjects, perſecution will be unavoidable. For ſhould any in that ſociety give up with the profeſſion of any of thoſe truths and inſtitutions which the ſociety judges to be Chriſt's, he muſt, according to the nature of ſociety, be deprived of the defence of that ſociety which hath thoſe truths in its conſtitution, and forfeits his right to all the worldly privileges of that ſociety, which, by the conſtitution of it, belong unto the profeſſion of thoſe truths, and the obſervation of thoſe inſtitutions. Further, if any in that ſociety, while it ſtands, ſhould find himſelf obliged, in his conſcience, to profeſs contrary to any of thoſe things that are held for truths of Chriſt by the ſociety, and are in the conſtitution of it, then the power of the ſociety muſt be put forth againſt him for the defence of the ſociety. So ſuch an aſſociation will be found inconſiſtent with that natural right of mankind, to be defended in the kingdoms of this world, from violence offered to their conſciences, which yet our Lord hath not taken away from thoſe kingdoms, by ſending his goſpel unto them. And this, if it were maintained, would anſwer all the good ends that could be propoſed by ſuch an aſſociation. For to deſtroy mens lives that will not receive Chriſt, or profeſs him, is not an end of a worldly ſociety that Chriſt will approve of.

When God's kingdom was worldly of old, the caſe was o—

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therwiſe: for then the profeſſion of any other religion than the religion of the nation of Iſrael, was rebellion againſt the king of that nation: "But now," ſays Chriſt, "My kingdom "is not of this world, not from hence."

If the natural right of mankind, with reſpect to religion, had been maintained in the kingdoms of this world, there had never been ſuch a thing as the kingdom of Antichriſt; and Chriſt's ſubjects cannot be great ſufferers where this right is preſerved; and if it be preſerved, others will enjoy the benefit of it as well as they. But if it be not, they are the perſons that will ſuffer moſt. Others can diſſemble their principles, and feign ſubjection to tyrannical power; but they are bound by the law of Chriſt openly to confeſs all his truths, the leaſt of them not excepted, ſo far as they know them; and that as they would not be denied by him at his coming.

It does not appear in his word, nor as yet in his providence, that ever he deſigned that his ſervants in this world ſhould be, by themſelves, in a capacity to defend their profeſſion againſt the powers of this earth, by the ſword. And they muſt "be ſtrangers on earth," conformed to the image of their ſuffering maſter, in bearing the croſs; and not conformed to this world, whatever ſhape it put on, whatever form it be caſt into; but transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, Rom. xii. 1. 2. "They are "crucified to the world, and the world to them; they are "dead to it, and their life is hid with Chriſt in God, not to "appear till he appear," Gal. vi. 12. 14. Col. iii. 3. 4. Then it is that the ſaints ſhall reign on the earth and till then they will be companions in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt.

If any of Chriſt's ſubjects ſhall, at any time, be in places of power, he has given them no warrant nor command to employ their power for deſtroying mens lives on his account; far leſs has he afforded any encouragement to his followers to raiſe up themſelves in the world, unto the diſturbance of the kingdoms of the earth, and the perſecuting of them that differ from them, or any party of them, under pretence of defending Chriſt's kingdom by the ſword.

CHAP. IV.

Of the proper means whereby the kingdom of Chriſt is ſet up, maintained, and advanced in the world.

OUR Lord having ſet aſide the way of eſtabliſhing a kingdom the moſt feaſible in man's eyes, and the way of which his own diſciples ſeemed very fond, proceeds to declare the way of ſetting up, advancing, and defending his kingdom in the world: "Jeſus anſwered, Thou ſayſt that I "am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cauſe "came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto "the truth."

SECT. I.

THis kingdom is not ſet up, maintained, or advanced in the world, by human policy, but by the truth. It might be expected, that when the power of the ſword is laid aſide, there would be the more need of this kind of wiſdom. But inſtead of this wiſdom, we have here the truth. They that were employed at firſt in ſetting up and promoting this kingdom in the world, uſed great plainneſs of ſpeech, and ſpake naked truth without diſguiſe: 2 Cor. iv. 1. 2. "Therefore, "ſeeing we have this miniſtry, as we have received mercy, "we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of diſ- "honeſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor handling the word "of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the truth, com- "mending ourſelves to every man's conſcience, as in the "ſight of God." And, upon a review of their conduct, they had this to ſay, 2 Cor. i. 12. "Our rejoicing is this, the teſti- "mony of our conſcience, that, in ſimplicity and godly ſin- "cerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, "we have had our converſation in the world, and more a- "bundantly to you-wards." And this belongs unto that wiſdom which is peculiar to the kingdom of Chriſt, and is oppoſed to the wiſdom of this world, after this manner, 1 Cor. iii. 18. 19. 20. "Let no man deceive himſelf. If "any man among you ſeemeth to be wiſe in this world, let "him become a fool, that he may be wiſe. For the wiſdom "of this world is fooliſhneſs with God. For it is written, "He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs; and again,

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"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe, that they are "vain." If we conſider that context, we may find this kind of wiſdom pointed at, as one of the things that defile the temple of God, being moſt uſeful in carrying on party-deſigns, and managing feuds. And we may ſee what the Apoſtle James ſays of this wiſdom, and how he diſtinguiſhes it from that wiſdom which is from above, James iii. 13. 17.

Yet there are ſome things brought, as from the word of God, for the uſe of this kind of wiſdom in advancing the kingdom of Chriſt. That which the Apoſtle wipes off as a foul aſperſion caſt upon him, 2 Cor. xii. 16. 17. 18. "Be-"ing crafty, I caught you with guile," is by ſome adduced to this purpoſe, and they call it "holy guile!" And his making the goſpel of Chriſt without charge to the Corinthians, though he had power to be chargeable to them, and his becoming a ſervant to the various tempers and diſpoſitions of men, in indifferent things, for the goſpel's ſake, that he might gain their ſouls to Chriſt, and ſave them, 1 Cor. ix. 18.—23. is pleaded to patroniſe our walking in crafty compliances with the corrupt inclinations of the men of this world, in order to gain an authority over them, to ſave ourſelves from the effects of the world's hatred, and to advance our worldly intereſt. This did not Paul.

SECT. II.

THE kingdom of Chriſt is ſet up, maintained, and advanced in the world, by bearing witneſs unto the truth; and ſo not by the ſtrength of human reaſoning, nor by the moving influences of human eloquence.

This truth has wiſdom in it, "even the hidden wiſdom of "God, which none of the princes of this world knew;" and there is an utterance in bearing witneſs unto this truth, which they that know, can diſtinguiſh from human reaſon and eloquence. But our Lord came not into the world to teach moral philoſophy, nor to oblige men to acknowledge the truth by the force of philoſophical argument, nor to entice them to embrace it by the charms of rhetoric: for he came to bear witneſs unto the truth.

This faithful and true witneſs gave his teſtimony on the earth in the days of his fleſh, and now bears witneſs to us from heaven, from whence he ſpeaks in the miniſtry of the goſpel, Heb. xii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 12. His miniſters that are ſent

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by him are his witneſſes, declaring unto men the teſtimony of God. They muſt have ſome acquaintance with this teſtimony themſelves, at leaſt by that illumination which is called common, and is the foundation of all thoſe gifts that are for the edification of the church, 1 Cor. xii. 4.—7. And they muſt lay open what they thus know to the world, proclaiming it as Chriſt's meſſengers, or declaring it as his witneſſes. This is preaching. Now, as it would be very unſuitable for a herald making a proclamation, or a witneſs bearing teſtimony, to philoſophiſe or harangue, to diſpute or dreſs up his diſcourſe in all the beauties of eloquence, in order to perſuade men of what he teſtifies; ſo it is in this caſe. And this ſerves rather to make the teſtimony ſuſpected. If by force of argument or eloquence, he can induce men to acknowledge and receive what he teſtifies, ſo as to anſwer the deſign of it, what uſe is there for that teſtimony which he declares?

When we embrace the goſpel in the proper way, ſo as to be ſaved by it, it is by divine faith receiving the divine teſtimony: "For if we receive the witneſs of men, the witneſs "of God is greater. He that believeth, hath this witneſs "in himſelf," 1 John v. 9. 10. Our Lord, ſpeaking of the evidence given to the Jews for his being the Meſſiah, John's miniſtry, and beyond that the works given him to finiſh, doth at length ſend them to the teſtimony of God in the word, declaring, that "they believed not, becauſe they had "not his word abiding in them," whatever regard to it they profeſſed, John v. 32.—39. There is an extrinſic evidence for Chriſtianity, which may ſtop the mouths of gainſayers, and move men to attend to the divine teſtimony in the word of ſcripture-revelation; but the faith whereby men are ſaved, doth not ſtand on this extrinſic evidence, but on the evidence that is in the divine teſtimony itſelf. Some would make our faith to be the aſſent to the concluſion of ſuch a ſyllogiſm as this: "Whatever God ſays is true; but God ſays this; "therefore this is true." But the buſineſs of faith is with that propoſition, "God ſays this." There is not ſo much occaſion for faith to ſhew us, that whatſoever God ſays is true, and that if he ſays this, it muſt be true. The great pinch where faith is needful, is in the making out to us that God ſays this; and the province of faith is, to give aſſent to this propoſition. Whatever way it be therefore that this is made out to me, in that way comes my perſuaſion of it. If my perſuaſion be in the aſſent to the concluſion of a philoſophical argument, then it is ſcience, not faith; if my perſuaſion

ſion go upon the evidence of human teſtimony, then it is human faith; and if my perſuaſion go upon evidence that the divine teſtimony carries in itſelf, then it is truly divine faith.

No man can ſay, it is impoſſible that God ſhould teſtify his mind and will in ſuch a revelation as we have in the writings of the inſpired prophets and apoſtles, and give abundant evidence that it is he that ſpeaks in this word itſelf. Neither will it be manifeſted to be impoſſible, that by means of this revelation, he ſhould frame the minds of thoſe whom he will have to underſtand it, into a ſuitableneſs to this his truth, and make them capable to diſcern this evidence, in having a true underſtanding of the truth which he teſtifies, and which carries this evidence in itſelf. Yea, it cannot well be conceived, how we can be furniſhed, in another manner, with a new ſet of principles by a divine revelation. But men will have the Moſt High to ſatisfy them of the truth of his revelation in their own way: "The Jews required a ſign, and "the Greeks ſought after wiſdom." The Jews ſaw ſigns; but were they ſatisfied with them? No: "As many of them "as received not the witneſs of God in themſelves," and had not his word abiding in them, "believed not" unto ſalvation. And our Lord tells us, Luke xvi. 31. "If they hear not Mo-"ſes and the prophets, neither will they be perſuaded though "one roſe from the dead." And if the Greeks that ſought after wiſdom, had lived unto theſe days, they had ſeen abundance of that kind of wiſdom they were ſeeking for, brought forth to evidence the truth of the goſpel; and ſome men ſatisfying themſelves ſo much in it, as to imagine, that their aſſent, upon this evidence of their own production, is indeed divine faith; yea, and to ridicule all pretences unto any higher evidence of another kind, as enthuſiaſtic imaginations. When theſe men come to inquire into the meaning of this revelation, whereof they pretend to be thus convinced, they explain it to themſelves by that ſame wiſdom, whereby they convince themſelves, that the revelation comes from God. Thus the Greek would find his wiſdom in the goſpel, and it ſhould no more be ſo ridiculous to him, as ſometime a day it was; but then I am miſtaken, if he would be much the wiſer or better by it; and it is plain, that the bleſſed fruits of the goſpel brought forth by them that believed it, as it was the jeſt of the Greeks, have not attended this new faith, even in them that make moſt of it.

But, ſays the Apoſtle, we have a better way of doing to convince men; we declare the teſtimony of God, 1 Cor. ii.

1. 2.

1. 2. "We preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtum-
" bling-block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but unto
" them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the
" power of God, and the wiſdom of God." 1 Cor. i. 23. 24.

In this teſtimony, and the ſubject of it, ſo ſoon as it is truly diſcerned, the Jew will find the power of God in a far more glorious manner than in all his ſigns, even the power of God unto his ſalvation; and this is the ſign of the prophet Jonas, Matth. xii. 38. 39. 40. The Greek will find here the wiſdom of God unto his ſalvation, excelling his as far as God excells him, confounding his wiſdom, and making all his wiſdom of words, his diſputing eloquent wiſdom, " fooliſh-
" neſs:" for here he will ſee more than notions or words,
" even the deep things of God," and " the wiſdom of God
" in a myſtery, the hidden wiſdom, which none of the prin-
" ces of this world knew," and which " was ordained before
" the world unto" our "glory." Thus both Jew and Greek will find more ſatisfaction in the goſpel than they were inquiring for. But who will find this? Only the Jews and Greeks that are called of God by this teſtimony concerning Chriſt crucified. The reſt, both Jews and Greeks, will remain where they were, ſtumbling at the preaching of the croſs, and counting it fooliſhneſs, becauſe they find not that in it which they were requiring and ſeeking after.

Every one that is perſuaded upon this evidence, ſees with his own eyes. The unwiſe and unlearned need not take the truths of this revelation, and the meaning of it, upon truſt, from the men of wiſdom, becauſe they have not ability nor leiſure to ſatisfy themſelves about it. The Jew needs not be obliged to the Greek for his wiſdom, nor needs the Greek the ſigns of the Jew here; for unto both Jews and Greeks that are called, Chriſt crucified, teſtified of in the goſpel, is " the power of God, and the wiſdom of God." This evi-
dence that the divine teſtimony carries in itſelf, is for men of all ſorts whom the Lord ſhall call. The wiſdom of the wiſe man is no advantage to him, as to the receiving this evi-
dence; nor is the ſtupidity and fooliſhneſs of the unwiſe any loſs to him in this caſe: " Yea, God hath choſen the fooliſh
" things of the world to confound the wiſe, and hides theſe
" things from the wiſe and prudent, while he reveals them
" unto babes. No man can ſee" theſe things " except he
" be born again;" and the unwiſe, that have not a diſcerning of the diſputing wiſdom of words, nor a taſte for the plea-
ſures of human eloquence, ſtand as fair for this, as the diſpu-

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ter of this world. When the unwiſe receives the teſtimony of God upon its own evidence, though it make him wiſe unto ſalvation, it does not turn him into a philoſopher; and when the wiſe man believes the teſtimony of God, it makes him indeed wiſer than ever he was before, yet not with that wiſdom which he ſought after, and wherein he once gloried; for it makes that wiſdom fooliſhneſs to him, and now he is taught to glory only in the Lord Chriſt, who is made of God to him wiſdom. Thus God, in ſaving ſinners, ſtains the pride of man's glory, (and there is nothing whereof men deſire to glory more than their underſtanding and wiſdom), that he alone may be exalted. We fell from God, affecting to be as gods for knowledge; and it was every way meet that God, in recovering us to himſelf, ſhould effectually humble us in this reſpect, glorifying his own wiſdom, and ſtaining the pride of ours.

This truth of the goſpel, whereby Chriſt advances his kingdom in the world, is practical; and when it is received upon its proper evidence, it muſt influence the practice: but all that evidence which is by ſome ſet up as the only true evidence upon which we receive the goſpel, may be, and is clearly perceived by men, that are no wiſe influenced by the goſpel in their practice. For what ſhould hinder them to perceive it? Many ſuch have as clear wits, and as much thirſt for philoſophical knowledge, as other men. What then ſhould make ſuch a man a Chriſtian in his practice? His corrupt affections certainly muſt be rectified. But how ſhould that be, if it be not by the light and evidence of the goſpel? Yet he has that evidence already, and he is the ſame man ſtill. But if this is to be done with a blind influence of power without light, how ſhall our wiſe men underſtand this, or reconcile this kind of dealing with a rational man? To be moved thus, and influenced blindly to live the Chriſtian life, muſt certainly be unto theſe men as ridiculous, as the true way of receiving the goſpel is. Therefore this man muſt have more light to make him a Chriſtian than our philoſophers can afford him; and that is no other than the light that ſhines in the truth of the goſpel itſelf, the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, which when he is enabled to behold, will effectually change him, and conform him to itſelf in heart and life, ſo far as he beholds it. Now, this is by means of the "fooliſhneſs of preaching," or declaring unto men the teſtimony of God in ſuch a way as is, unto the wiſe men of this world, fooliſhneſs; and when the truth of the goſpel is received, by this means, "not as the

" word of man, (but as it is indeed) the word of God, it " worketh effectually in all them that thus believe it."

Men may have all that perſuaſion of the truth of the Chriſtian religion which the extrinſic evidence can afford, without diſcerning the glory, or feeling the power of any one truth of the goſpel: and whence is this, but that they receive not the truth of the goſpel upon its proper evidence, and ſo indeed receive it not at all? for whatever may be pretended, they that diſcern not the glory of goſpel-truth, and in whom it works nôt effectually, " do not receive it, " and believe it, as it is in truth, the word of God," 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. Col. i. 6. 1 John v. 19. 20. 1 John ii. 4. " He that " ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, " is a liar, and the truth is not in him." And however much they who deſpiſe the evidence proper to the goſpel as enthuſiaſtic, may value themſelves upon doing ſuch things, and leading ſuch a life, as an infidel may lead as well as they; yet it is impoſſible, that the peculiar fruits of that faith which works by love, and purifies the ſoul unto unfeigned love of the brethren, can be found with them, or that they ſhould have thoſe works to produce, by which the Apoſtle James calls men " to ſhew their faith," and by which our Lord will try the faith of the hearers of the goſpel at his ſecond coming, Matth. xxv. 31.—46.

This perſuaſion of the goſpel, which produces fruits ſuitable to the goſpel, is begotten in men, neither by the ſigns of the Jew, nor the wiſdom of the Greek, however theſe may ſerve to make men attentive to the goſpel, and render them inexcuſable in an open rejection of it; but by this bearing witneſs unto the truth. Chriſt himſelf is the witneſs, and the goſpel preached by his miniſters is his teſtimony; and whoſoever " receives his teſtimony has ſet to his ſeal that " God is true." In him we have all the perſons of the Godhead bearing witneſs unto us. The Father ſpeaks to us only in him, and by him; " and none knoweth the Father, ſave the " Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him," Matth. xi. 27. " God, who, at ſundry times, and in divers manners, " ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the prophets, hath " in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son,—the bright- " neſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon," Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. " And the Spirit of truth," the Holy Ghoſt, " given by the Father," without meaſure unto him the Son of man, " is ſent by him from the Father," and bears witneſs to us in the goſpel, Iſ. lxi. 1. 2. John iii. 34. xiv. 16.

17.

17. xv. 26. 27. and xvi. 13. 14. 15. Thus the teſtimony of Jeſus is the teſtimony of the glorious Three that now bear record in heaven, 1 John v. 7. When Jeſus began his miniſtry on the earth, there was a glorious manifeſtation of theſe Three at his baptiſm, Matth. iii. 16. 17.; but now they witneſs glorioufly in heaven, in the teſtimony of Jeſus which we have now from thence. Jeſus Chriſt began to teſtify in his miniſtry upon the earth, and was then declared very far to excel all that came before him. John Baptiſt, greater than all the prophets, teſtifies of him, that he was preferred before him, though coming after him; and that on theſe accounts, 1. Becauſe "he was before him," (the eternal God), John i. 15.; and becauſe he is "from above," (the Lord from heaven), John iii. 31.; and to this agrees our Lord's ſaying, "I was born, and I came unto the world, to bear witneſs "unto the truth." 2. Becauſe he was upon all the counſels of God, and in the contrivance of the great things brought to light by him, John iii. 32. "What he hath ſeen and heard, "that he teſtifieth." John i. 18. "No man hath ſeen God "at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bo- "ſom of the Father, he hath declared him." 3. Becauſe the Father giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him, John iii. 34. The man Chriſt Jeſus was furniſhed with the Spirit for the exerciſe of his prophetical office on the earth beyond all the prophets, and his hearers wondered at all the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and were obliged to own that he ſpake with a peculiar authority, and "that never "man ſpake like this man." But now having aſcended to the right hand of the Father, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Spirit, he ſpeaks from heaven in a far more glorious and powerful manner; and when he began to teſtify from thence, he made his rude Galileans ſpeak in an amazing manner "the wonderful things of God," Acts ii. 7. 11. John xvi. 12. 13. Eph. iv. 10.—13.

And this is that prophet that was promiſed to the church by Moſes, Deut. xviii. 14.—19. His voice at Sinai, that ſhook the earth, was ſo terrible, that the children of Iſrael ſaid unto Moſes, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: "but let not God ſpeak with us, leſt we die," Exod. xx. 19. And according to this the Lord ſaid to Moſes, "They "have well ſpoken that which they have ſpoken: I will raiſe "them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto "thee." In hearing the voice of this our brother, the antitype of Moſes, we hear the voice of the Lord our God, with-

out that fear: for now "he hath taken part with us in flesh "and blood; for which cause he is not ashamed to call us "brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my bre-"thren."

His kingdom is set up and advanced in the world by the exercise of this his prophetical office; and thus we see how his prophetical and kingly offices are connected. His kingdom is a kingdom of light, into which we are translated from the power of darkness, Col. i. 13. And "he is a commander "to the people, by being a witness to them," Is. lv. 4. "He "bears witness unto the truth; and every one that is of the "truth, heareth his voice."

SECT. III.

PIlate saw that our Lord laid great stress upon this truth; and though he despised truth as a mean of setting up a kingdom, when he proposed that scornful question, "What "is truth?" and waited not for an answer; yet it becomes us diligently to inquire, till we be satisfied, what this truth is: and though it was not fit that Pilate should know it at that time, seeing, as we may hear, it respected Christ's cross; yet it is of the utmost importance and advantage to us to know it now.

We find God's mercy and his truth much spoken of and celebrated in the Old Testament. It is the promise of Christ that is intended; and truly God's mercy and truth together are no where to be found but with him, Psal. lxxxix. 24. They that saw his glory, when he came in the flesh, found him "full of grace and truth," John i. 14. He testifies of himself, "that he is the truth," John xiv. 6. "In him," the Son of God manifest in the flesh, "the end of the law for right-"teousness unto every one that believeth, all the promi-"ses of God are yea and amen," 2 Cor. i. 20. So that he is the great subject of this his testimony in the gospel; and in order to understand what he mainly intends by truth here, we must consider how he is especially set forth in the gospel, to be believed in unto salvation, and what doctrine of the gospel it is whereby it is especially distinguished both from Judaism and natural religion.

We shall find, that the great thing testified of him in the gospel is, that he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and we are told,

told, "that he that believeth this in his heart, and confeſſeth "it with his mouth, ſhall be ſaved," Rom. iv. 24. 25. and x. 4. 8. 9. 10. When the Apoſtle declares himſelf not aſhamed of the goſpel, and calls it the power of God unto ſalvation, he tells us, it is becauſe "therein is the righteouſneſs of God "revealed," from the faithfulneſs of God to the faith of every believer, Rom. i. 16. 17. When he gives an account of the great ſubject of the goſpel-meſſage, he tells us it is this, "God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not "imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.— And be reconciled "to God: for he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew "no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in "him." 2 Cor. v. 18.—21. And when he ſpeaks of the teſtimony of God, the object of ſaving faith, he tells us, "it "is Chriſt crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2. 1 Cor. i. 23. 24. This was the great intent of the prophecies, which ſpake of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the following glory: "For to him "gave all the prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſin," Acts x. 43. This therefore is that truth of the goſpel which is eſpecially witneſſed unto, and whereby Chriſt ſays, "his kingdom is advanced in the world." And this may be further clear unto us if we conſider,

1. That this is the diſtinguiſhing truth of Chriſtianity, whereby it is differenced from mere natural religion, and from all the religions in the world that any way compete with it. This is the great thing, the firſt thing, that any religion can propoſe to ſinful men, How they ſhould be pardoned, reconciled to God, and juſtified in his ſight? If the Chriſtian religion differ from others in any thing, it is in this: they all propoſe other ways of coming into favour with God, and falſe ways; but Chriſt has made peace by the blood of his croſs, and thereby reconciled all his people, of all nations, unto God in one body; and has come and preached this peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh; and this is the truth wherein the true God is glorioufly manifeſted and diſtinguiſhed from every falſe god.

2. God's truth in the juſt ſentence of his broken law, and in the promiſe of life to ſinners, meets and conſiſts only in Chriſt, our Redeemer from the curſe of the law, by being made a curſe for us, that the bleſſing might come upon us: and therefore this may well be called *the truth*.

The law condemned us in a head and repreſentative; and there was nothing in it to hinder our ſuffering in another head,

head, if God ſhould think it meet: and they who are juſtified in Chriſt, were as verily puniſhed in him, and as verily fulfilled the law in him, "as they ſinned in Adam," Rom. v. 15.—19. Thus, when God pardons a ſinner, and juſtifies him in Chriſt, he no wiſe makes void the law; ſeeing we have fulfilled it in Chriſt our head unto far better purpoſe than if we had undergone the curſe by ourſelves without him. So when he holds us guiltleſs, he does not hold us guiltleſs, and clearing he does not clear, according to a phraſe frequently uſed in the Old Teſtament, but always ſpoiled in our tranſlation, Exod. xxxiv. 6. 7. Numb. xiv. 18. "That will "by no means clear the guilty." It ſhould be, "clearing "will not clear." Jer. xxx. 11. it is ſaid to the church, "Though I make a full end of all nations, I will not make "a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in meaſure," (or, I'll take a wiſe way of correcting thee), "and will not leave "thee altogether unpuniſhed." It ſhould be, "and clearing "will not clear:" for the phraſe is the ſame here as in Exodus, though differently tranſlated. We may find the ſame phraſe, Jer. xlvi. 28. Nah. i. 3.

3. This is the truth of the legal ſhadows: "The law was "given by Moſes, but truth came by Jeſus Chriſt, who is "the end of the law for righteouſneſs unto every one that "believeth." See Heb. ix. and x. And in this truth the promiſes of God are Yea and Amen: For it is either the accompliſhment, or the foundation of the accompliſhment, of them all, 1 Pet. i. 11.

4. This truth concerning Chriſt delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification, is that wherein the ſtamp of divine authority on ſcripture-revelation is chiefly manifeſt. All the parts of this revelation depend on this, and are connected with it: ſo that, take away this truth out of the goſpel, it will be another goſpel, and the whole doctrine of the prophets and apoſtles will be utterly made of none effect, as to eternal life and ſalvation. That faith whereby we ſavingly believe ſcripture-revelation, is faith in the blood of the Son of God; and by this faith we receive the whole ſcripture-revelation, which does all, from beginning to end, one way or other relate unto this. And this is the great touchſtone for the trial of true and falſe doctrine. See Heb. xiii. 7.——10. Eph. iv. 13. 14. 15.

5. This truth, witneſſed unto in the goſpel, is the great mean whereby the power of God is put forth to ſave ſinners, and to ſubject them to him in his kingdom, Luke i. 77.

Gal. iii.

Gal. iii. 2. Rom. i. 16. 17. 1 Cor. i. 18. 23. 24. Col. i. 13. 14. It was by the revelation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the goſpel, that Chriſt's kingdom was at firſt ſet up and advanced in the world; and it was by the revival of this great truth, after it had been buried under Antichriſt's reign, that the Lord began to conſume that wicked one at the reformation. Luther ſaid, "This article reigns in my heart, and with this "the church ſtands or falls." Without this great truth, all other means for promoting or defending the kingdom of Chriſt will be altogether ineffectual; yea, on the contrary, ſerve to advance the kingdom of Satan. The ſtrength of Chriſt's kingdom, and its ſafety, lies all in this truth: ſo that they who would advance this kingdom in the world, muſt bear it about with them in their hearts, in all their preaching, and in all their converſation in the miniſtry. And truly this would be a ſpring of daily refreſhment to themſelves, and of great liberty and boldneſs in all the labour of the goſpel-miniſtry, and in all the ſufferings that attend it.

6. To the ſame purpoſe alſo we might conſider the name whereby Chriſt is called among the ſubjects of his kingdom, *The Lord our Righteouſneſs*; and that great motto of the church whereby it is diſtinguiſhed from all other ſocieties, Jer. xxxiii. 16. "In thoſe days ſhall Judah be ſaved, and Je-"ruſalem ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is the name wherewith "ſhe ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs."

Thus we ſee the connection betwixt the kingdom of Chriſt and his prieſthood. This King is Melchiſedeck, King of righteouſneſs, and a prieſt on his throne: and the influence of his prieſthood on his kingdom is ſet before us, Pſal. ii. 8. Pſal. cx. Iſ. lii. 11. 12. All the glory of Chriſt's kingdom follows upon and flows from his ſufferings; and they never ſerved him in his kingdom, whatever they may pretend, that did not firſt ſubmit unto his righteouſneſs.

CHAP. V.

Of the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom.

THE laſt thing to be conſidered in this teſtimony of our Lord, is the account he gives of his ſubjects. He is not aſhamed to confeſs them, and his relation to every one of them; and far leſs reaſon have they to be aſhamed to confeſs him, or to be aſhamed of one another.

He

He ſays, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my "voice."

Here we muſt conſider, 1. What it is to be "of the truth." 2. What is the import of that, "Every one that is of the "truth." 3. What it is "to hear Chriſt's voice." And, 4. What is the connection betwixt "being of the truth," and "hearing his voice."

If theſe things be underſtood, we cannot be at a loſs about the ſubjects of this kingdom on earth.

SECT. I.

WE have had ſome account of that truth by which our Lord here deſcribes his ſubjects. Now, it concerns thoſe that would know if they have any part in this kingdom of Chriſt, to underſtand well what it is to be "of this truth."

There is an expreſſion, Rom. vi. 17. which ſeems to have a near alliance with this, and may ſerve to clear it: "Ye "were the ſervants of ſin; but ye have obeyed from the heart "that form of doctrine which was delivered you;" or, more agreeably to the firſt language, "that type, or frame, or "mould of doctrine, into which ye were delivered." The doctrine here pointed to by the Apoſtle ſeems to be the ſame with that truth of which our Lord ſpeaks, even the goſpel of Chriſt; as it "reveals the righteouſneſs of God from faith to "faith, that the juſt may live by faith;" and manifeſts the righteouſneſs of God without the law, "which is witneſſed "by the law and the prophets", Rom. iii. 21. Of this great doctrine the Apoſtle had been treating in the foregoing part of the epiſtle; and in this chapter he is ſhewing the connection betwixt juſtification and ſanctification, and declaring the influence that this bleſſed doctrine of juſtification has upon ſinners to ſanctify them; and this in oppoſition to a common objection, and an error into which men are very ready to fall, who have not a true inſight into the doctrine of God's glorious free grace in the juſtification of guilty ſinners through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone. To this purpoſe he had ſaid, ℣ 14. "Sin ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye "are not under the law, but under grace:" and here he tells them to whom he writes, that "they were the ſervants "of ſin;" but it was matter of thankfulneſs to God, that they were delivered from that ſlavery; and ſtill the greater ground of thankfulneſs, the more they had been inſlaved. And by what means were they delivered from the bondage of ſin,

ſin, and made ſervants of righteouſneſs? He tells it was by that doctrine. Yet the bare outward revelation, and their hearing and having a notion of that doctrine, as they had of other doctrines they heard, was not ſufficient unto this: "Ye "have obeyed," ſays he, "from the heart, that mould of "doctrine into which ye were caſt; and ſo being freed from "the ſervice of ſin, they became ſervants of righteouſneſs." That bleſſed doctrine was as a mould unto their hearts, into which they being caſt, and new framed, became anſwerable unto it; and ſo were freed from the yoke of ſin, and fitted unto the ſervice of righteouſneſs. Thus the Apoſtle expreſſes the work of regeneration, and our union with Chriſt, by means of the doctrine of juſtification by the free grace of God, "through the redemption that is in Chriſt's blood." And ſo he ſhows the influence that this doctrine has upon our ſanctification; as he does further, Rom. vii. 4. 5. 6. And by this we may ſee what it is to be "of the truth."

1. To be of this truth, is to be, as it were, caſt into it as in a mould, and framed according to it: "That form of "doctrine whereinto ye were delivered."

This truth is not at all of us. For as it is none of thoſe principles which are commonly called natural to us, ſo we do not receive it as we do concluſions that we draw from or by thoſe principles; nor do we admit it on the account of its agreeableneſs unto thoſe principles of ours. It is altogether foreign to us naturally; and yet it is a truth that muſt be a moſt powerfully practical principle in us to make us live a new life, unto which all the principles we had before, howſoever improved by us, could never influence us. And therefore it muſt be as deeply rooted in our minds as any of our principles, and have ſuch poſſeſſion in our ſouls, as to maſter all thoſe corrupt principles that have taken ſuch ſeat in the minds of all mankind, as to overpower all the right dictates of the natural conſcience, and, in ſpite of them, to influence mankind into a life of ſin. Now, it is evident, we cannot bring home this truth to dwell after this manner in our ſouls.

On the contrary, when a ſinner begins to be convinced of his ſin, and of the judgment of God againſt him, and is rouſed to hearken to the dictates of his conſcience, he labours to anſwer thoſe dictates; and ſo goes about to make amends for his ſin himſelf, and to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of his own. But the farther he goes on in this way, as he ſtrengthens ſin the more, Rom. vii. 5. 9. ſo he fortifies himſelf the more againſt the entrance of this truth into his ſoul;

eſpecially if he imagines himſelf any wiſe ſucceſsful in his attempts after righteouſneſs upon natural principles. And if the natural conſcience be thoroughly awakened, it will influence the ſinner, after all his attempts to ſatisfy it, unto deſpair. For it knows nothing of the imputed righteouſneſs, and can take no ſatisfaction in it, till this truth take poſſeſſion of the ſoul: and it requires as much to ſatisfy the duly awakened conſcience as to ſatisfy the juſtice of God.

It is alſo manifeſt in them who know theſe things in their experience, that as there is a great enmity in the heart of man againſt God, ſo this enmity ſhows itſelf eſpecially againſt this truth; becauſe therein is made the moſt glorious diſcovery of God, and becauſe it is that which effectually brings us near him, and conforms us to him.

And ſuch is the pride of man's heart, and ſo much does this truth ſtain the pride of his glorying, that the mind and heart of man will by no means ſubmit to it, but rather be engaged in the hardeſt labour for ſelf-righteouſneſs or deſpair, and give up with all hopes of eternal life, than ſubmit to, and take reſt in the righteouſneſs which this truth brings unto us. So it cannot be of us to receive this truth to bear ſway in our ſouls; and it is no wonder that there have been ſo many ſubtile reaſonings againſt it, ſo many perplexing diſputes about it, and ſo many ſorts of oppoſition made unto it, ſince it has been publiſhed and profeſſed in the world.

This truth comes into our minds and hearts from above, by divine teaching, and it is "ingrafted in our minds," Jam. i. 21. Not growing naturally in them, but brought from elſewhere, and ingrafted, that we may bring forth a new kind of fruit, according to the nature of the graft, and not according to the nature of the ſtock into which it is grafted. It is as the ſeed whereby we are "begotten of God unto a new life." Jam. i. 18. "Of his own will," not of ours, "begat he us "with the word of truth." It is that ſeed of which we are born again: 1 Pet. i. 22.—25. "Seeing ye have purified "your ſouls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto "unfeigned love of the brethren; love one another with a "pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible "ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which "liveth and abideth for ever. For all fleſh is as graſs, and "all the glory of man as the flower of graſs. The graſs "withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the "word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word "which by the goſpel is preached unto you."

They

They in whoſe minds and hearts this truth is ingrafted, and who are begotten and born again of this incorruptible ſeed, are "of the truth;" and theſe are they whoſe ſouls are caſt into the mould of the goſpel-revelation of righteouſneſs in Chriſt, "delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our "juſtification."

This is that regeneration, that new birth, wherein we are united to Chriſt as members of his body, and wherein our whole conformity to him takes its beginning. So far are we conformed to God's image in Chriſt, and ſubjected unto him, as this truth takes place in us, and not a whit farther.

We may likewiſe notice, that to be of this truth, is the ſame as to be of faith, Gal. iii. which is oppoſed to being of the works of the law.

2. To be of this truth is to believe it. They that are delivered into that form of doctrine, do obey it. And the way that we obey a truth teſtified unto, is by believing it upon the authority of the teſtifier. In believing this doctrine, there is a ſubjection of the mind unto the authority of God in his teſtimony, which is in this doctrine. Thus we are ſaid to obey that form of doctrine into which we are delivered. And this perſuaſion of this truth, upon the evidence of the divine teſtimony in it, is indeed that faith whereby we are juſtified, and eternally ſaved. And this is that which the ſcripture ſeems mainly to intend, when it ſpeaks of faith, and calls us to believe. See 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 1 John v. 9. 10. John iv. 42. John iii. 33. John vi. 68. 69. This is that faith "which is "the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things ho-"ped for," Heb. xi. 1. This perſuaſion of the truth is, 1. That faith whereby we are juſtified, and which has the promiſe of bleſſedneſs: Matth. xvi. 16. 17. "Simon Peter an-"ſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living "God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art "thou Simon Barjona; for fleſh and blood hath not revealed "it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Rom. x. 6. 8. 9. 10. "But the righteouſneſs which is of faith, ſpeaketh "on this wiſe:—— The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and "in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach, "That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, "and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him "from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart "man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth con-"feſſion is made unto ſalvation." We may take notice, that the heart is not here oppoſed unto the mind, as is commonly

thought, but unto the mouth. 2. This is that faith whereby a troubled conſcience comes firſt to true peace and quiet: Pſal. cxxx. 4. "But there is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou "mayſt be feared." 3. This is that faith which is the prime fruit and evidence of the new birth, and whereby God dwelleth in us, and we in him: 1 John v. 1. "Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God." 1 John iv. 15. "Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, "God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 4. And this is that faith that overcomes the world, and is our victory over the world, and all the luſts and temptations of it: 1 John v. 4. 5. "For whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world: "and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our "faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that "believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God? This is he "that came by water and blood;—and it is the Spirit that "beareth witneſs, becauſe the Spirit is truth."

Thus the ſcripture-notion of faith agrees with the common notion of faith and belief among men, a perſuaſion of a thing upon teſtimony. But that faith whereby we believe the goſpel, has been very much darkened, by the many things that have been ſaid in the deſcription of it; while that which is moſt properly faith, has been either ſhut up in a narrow and dark corner of the deſcription, or almoſt excluded from it, as a thing preſuppoſed unto faith, and not that very faith itſelf whereby we are juſtified and ſaved. And ſome have ſo defined faith, as to take in into its own nature the whole of goſpel-obedience. Agreeably to this, we have heard in ſermons, that it has two hands, one to receive Chriſt, and another to give ourſelves away to him. And when we are preſſed and exhorted to believe in Chriſt, it is as if we were urged to put forth ſome we do not know what act of the will, or to give forth ſomething towards Chriſt by God's help, by which we are to be ſaved, on account of the connection made in the promiſe betwixt ſalvation, and that deed, whatever it be, which is called *faith*. By this means the hearers of the goſpel are ſet on to ſeek to do that deed, that work, called *faith*, to ſave them, and intitle them to eternal life. And ſerious ſouls are perplexed with many fruitleſs inquiries in themſelves, whether they have this thing called *faith*; while that which lies at the bottom of moſt part of their doubts, is either the weakneſs or the want of the perſuaſion of this truth, and their taking no notice of it, becauſe it is not much noticed in the accounts of faith that are made to them. And

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it is fooliſhly reckoned by many, that the belief of the truth is a common thing, and that it is no great matter to attain unto it; though the Apoſtle hath ſaid, "God hath from the "beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification "of the Spirit, and belief of the truth," 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. This glorious truth, containing in it "Chriſt the end of the "law for righteouſneſs unto every one that believe it," is able to give reſt to the weary ſoul, to make a bleſſed calm in the moſt troubled conſcience, and to raiſe up the moſt deſperate ſinner unto a lively hope. All this influence it hath upon them that believe, and in their believing of it. Therefore, while this is not attended to, it is a vain thing to labour after the aſſurance of hope: for where faith in this truth is not in exerciſe, neither the thing hoped for, nor the true ground of hope, can be diſcerned; "faith being the ſubſtance "of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen." It is impoſſible to have a "lively hope through the reſurrection "of Chriſt," without a lively faith in him, "delivered for "our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification." Therefore they begin at the wrong end, that preſs after the aſſurance of hope, without laying the foundation of the aſſurance of faith.

But what is this aſſurance, this πληροφορία, of faith? There are miſtakes about this. For ſome, perhaps, finding all their endeavours after the aſſurance of hope, without the lively faith of this great truth of the goſpel, altogether fruitleſs; and being at length brought to clear and ſure belief of this truth, and finding their conſciences quieted, the diſpoſition of their hearts changed, by the influence of this truth, and hope ariſing in their ſouls; they have imagined, that all this flowed at firſt from an aſſurance of Chriſt's being made fully theirs, and a certainty of their own ſalvation by him: and ſo they have made that the nature of faith. Whereas theſe fruits take their firſt riſe from the truth believed; and not from a perſuaſion of our intereſt in it, and of the abſolute certainty of our ſalvation; which is the aſſurance of hope, and muſt ariſe from faith with the fruits of it, Heb. vi. 11. Therefore we find the ſaints in the New Teſtament, when profeſſing their aſſurance of hope, always ſpeaking therewith of their faith, and the fruits of it. See 1 John iii. 23. 24.

The aſſurance of faith can be the aſſurance of no other thing but what is propoſed in the goſpel unto all the hearers of it, to be believed by them, upon hearing it, unto their ſalvation. But it is evident it is not revealed unto every goſpel-

ſpel hearer, that Chriſt is abſolutely given unto him, and that he ſhall be ſaved; becauſe this is not true; and therefore every hearer of the goſpel is not bound to believe this concerning himſelf: nor will the hearers of the goſpel that periſh, be damned for not believing that they ſhould never be damned. Seeing then the aſſurance of faith is the aſſurance of what is laid out in common to every goſpel-hearer, to be believed for their ſalvation; and ſeeing it was never, nor can be at any time, a truth, that Chriſt is abſolutely given certainly to ſave every goſpel-hearer, or that every goſpel-hearer ſhall be ſaved; we muſt have another notion of the aſſurance of faith. And the ſcripture is very clear in this matter. When it ſpeaks of the aſſurance of faith at its higheſt, it calls it the full aſſurance of underſtanding to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, Col. ii. 2. And what is that, but a full perſuaſion of the truth of which Chriſt ſpeaks, when he ſays, "Every one that is of the truth, "heareth my voice?"

So then, whoſoever is verily perſuaded of this truth that Chriſt bears witneſs unto, and that upon the credit of his teſtimony, and the evidence that it carries in itſelf, is of this truth; and this faith or belief is the fruit of the ſoul's being caſt into the mould of that doctrine, without which no obedience can be given unto it.

3. They that are of the truth obey it from the heart; they love it. As this teſtimony of Jeſus is received by faith, whereby we ſet to our ſeal that God is true, having the witneſs in ourſelves; ſo there is the greateſt good propoſed in this truth to be embraced by us: "He hath ſhewed thee "what is good," Mic. vi. 8. "Eat ye that which is good," If. lv. 2. This is the proper object of love: as faith reſpects the truth witneſſed unto, ſo love reſpects the good in this truth.

This love is another fruit of the new birth, flowing immediately from true faith; and is never, nor can be ſeparated from it. We read of ſome profeſſors of the truth periſhing, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, and this is made an evidence of their not believing it, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10.—13.

This love acts upon Chriſt in this truth, 1. In a way of eſteem, valuing him above all things, and counting all things beſides him, all things that ſtand in competition with him, "loſs and dung." Thus they that truly find Chriſt, are with him, as the wiſe merchant with the pearl of great price, when he

he hath found it, ſelling all to buy that pearl. Chriſt is indeed precious to all them that believe, and that to ſuch a degree, that he is their only glory: but the ſoul that thus loves him, will be grieved that it cannot eſteem him more, and will be ready to think it loves him not at all, becauſe it finds not any eſteem of him within itſelf ſuitable to ſuch a glorious object; and ſuch a ſoul will be jealous for him againſt his great rival ſelf, which is conſtantly putting in for a ſhare, at leaſt, of that love and eſteem which the ſoul finds only due to him. 2. In a way of earneſt deſire, expreſſed by the Apoſtle, when he ſays, "Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things loſs,— that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but "that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs "which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the "power of his reſurrrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings," Phil. iii. They that love and truly deſire Chriſt, find, as it were, a want in them, which nothing but he himſelf can fill up, and an uneaſineſs till they enjoy him, ariſing from faith's apprehenſion of his complete ſufficiency and fulneſs, his perfect ſuitableneſs unto their whole caſe, and his excellent glory. They deſire him, ſo as to be ready to part with all things, and to ſuffer the loſs of their neareſt and deareſt things for him; and this deſire ſets them on to the uſe of all the means of his own inſtitution for finding him. His word, and all his ordinances, from the leaſt to the greateſt of them, are as the field where this their treaſure is hid; and therefore "they ſell all to buy this field." Chriſt is eſpecially deſired by believers in that reſpect wherein he is a ſtumbling-block and fooliſhneſs to the world; even his croſs, and his righteouſneſs; and they deſire him ſo much on this account, that they breathe after conformity unto him in that ſame croſs. 3. In a way of complacence and delight. The ſoul having found Chriſt, and ſeen his glory ſhining in this truth by faith, is joyfully ſatisfied and well-pleaſed in him and his righteouſneſs, reſts under that ſhadow from all ſuch perplexing inquiries as that, "What ſhall I do to be ſaved?" and that with great delight, and ſeeks no further. The believer takes a peculiar complacence in the wiſdom and power of God unto ſalvation, and in the glorious diſcovery of the divine attributes, eſpecially the comely complexion of the divine mercy and juſtice in this truth, and in that wonderful connection betwixt the glory of God and the ſinner's ſalvation, that is to be ſeen in this truth, and in Chriſt himſelf,

ſelf, that glorious perſon, in whom all this is manifeſt. Such is the believer's complacence in Chriſt, that he abhors the neareſt and deareſt things to him, as they ſtand in competition with him. He counts his own righteouſneſs but loſs and dung for him. And "he that hates not father and mo-"ther, and even his own life, for Chriſt, is not worthy of "him." This love to Chriſt is eſpecially manifeſt in our love to all them that are of this truth without exception, on the account of their relation to him; and it is a very vain thing to pretend love to Chriſt, while we love not the leaſt of his little ones, beyond any other ſort of men in the world.

Thus they that are of the truth, love it: and as faith ſays of that word, "Chriſt came into the world to ſave the chief "of ſinners," that it is faithful; ſo love ſays, "It is worthy "of all acceptation." Chriſt's ſubjects are thus devoted unto this truth; it has their hearts, and ſo they are of it.

4. To be of the truth, is to be influenced by it, and to have it working effectually in us, unto all the ends for which it is revealed to us, and received by us, 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. Col. i. 5. 6. We have not this truth as a ſpeculation, only to divert ourſelves with it; or as a precious jewel, only to be laid up that we may pleaſe ourſelves by now and then looking upon it: but it muſt be a living principle of action in us, and muſt be with us, when we lie down and riſe up, and walk by the way, to influence us in the whole of our converſation in the world, and in the whole of the ſervice of God. It is with this truth, and in it, that the Spirit of Chriſt comes to dwell in our ſouls, Gal. iii. 2. And this is the great inſtrument by which he works his gracious works in us. The ſanctification of the ſpirit is with the belief of the truth: "Seeſt thou," ſays James, "how faith wrought with his "works," James ii. 22. And we are told, that "without "faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God," Heb. xi. 6.

As it has been a dangerous error, on the one hand, to think of leading a Chriſtian life, and pleaſing God, abſtractly from this truth; ſo it is a no leſs dangerous error, on the other hand, to think, that we may receive it unto our joy, and deliverance from the torments of hell, without its working effectually in us to make us live unto God. The word of the truth of the goſpel brings forth fruit in all them that know the grace of God in truth: and though in ſtony ground it wither, and among thorns be choaked; yet in good ground (that is, where men obey from the heart that form of doctrine into which they are delivered) it bringeth forth ſometimes

times thirty, ſometimes ſixty, ſometimes an hundred-fold. Thus the truth reigns in them that do believe it; ſo they obey it from the heart, and ſo they are of it.

Now we underſtand what it is to be of the truth, and that it is the ſame thing that the Apoſtle calls being of faith, Gal. iii. 7. 9. which, as was noticed, he oppoſes to being of the deeds of the law. Therefore all that are of the deeds of the law, and ſubmit not to the righteouſneſs of God, but, in their ignorance of the truth, are ſeeking by ſome means to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own, however ſincere they may appear to themſelves or others, yet they have not goſpel-ſincerity in them; for they "have not the truth in their inward parts." The imputation of righteouſneſs without works, and a ſpirit without guile, go together, Pſal. xxxii. 1. 2. Rom. iv. 6. 7. 8.: and all ſincerity and ſingleneſs of heart before God is of this truth. With ſuch a true heart it is that the Apoſtle calls us "to draw near, and come into the holieſt by the blood of "Jeſus, in full aſſurance of faith," Heb. x. 19.—22. "The "heart of man is deceitful above all things, and deſperately "wicked," till "the truth, as it is in Jeſus," take poſſeſſion of it, and make the man ſincere and upright, ſo far as it takes place in him, Eph. iv. 21.—25. And therefore it is ſtrange to ſee ſincerity ſet up, as it were, in oppoſition to this truth, and the glorious righteouſneſs it brings to us, the only ſpring of all the godly ſincerity that is in the world.

We find ſingleneſs of heart taken notice of, as a remarkable fruit of the truth in them that received it, when it came firſt from Chriſt, exalted by the right hand of God, Acts ii. 46. And their pretences to the faith of it are very poor, who ſtudy not ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, but walk in policy and fleſhly wiſdom, and glory in the wiſdom of this world, as to which the truth will make all them that are of it fools.

SECT. II.

THE ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom are, "Every one that is "of the truth." And theſe things are imported in this.

1. This truth, with its influence, is not now confined to any ſort of men, however qualified, and however excelling others. The uncircumciſed nations were excluded from Chriſt, till he ſhould come, and had no hope in the promiſe, by means of the wall of partition betwixt the Jews and them; but now Chriſt having broke down that in his death, and come "preaching peace to them that were afar off and nigh," they both, through him, have an acceſs by one Spirit to the

Father; and it is now free to all nations, all ſorts of ſinners, even the chief, to believe this truth unto their ſalvation, and to come into Chriſt's kingdom by the belief of this truth, Matth. xxii. 9. Mark xvi. 15. 16. Rom. iii. 21. 22. and x. 4. 11. 12. 13. How much reaſon have we Gentiles to rejoice in the New Teſtament on this account!

2. It takes no more to make any man a ſubject of Chriſt's kingdom, but to be of this truth; and it requires no leſs. "Every one that is of the truth heareth his voice," is his ſubject. The Jews, to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promiſes, cannot by all this be of Chriſt's kingdom, if they be not of this truth; and the uncircumciſed Gentiles are free in this kingdom to the enjoyment of the privileges of it, by being of this truth, without more. Yea, "the "Gentiles, which followed not after righteouſneſs, have at-"tained to righteouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs which is "of faith: but Iſrael, which followed after the law of "righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the law of righteouſ-"neſs. Wherefore? Becauſe they ſought it, not by faith, "but as it were by the works of the law; for they ſtumbled "at that ſtumbling-ſtone," Rom. ix. 30.—33. The circumciſion of the Jew leaves him on a level here with the uncircumciſed Gentile, and the uncircumciſion of the Gentile puts him not a whit behind the Jew as to an intereſt in this kingdom. The Greek has no advantage by his politeneſs in this matter; nor is the rudeneſs of the Barbarian his loſs in this caſe. The ſlavery of the bondman cannot hinder his freedom in the kingdom of Chriſt, if he be of this truth, and without this the liberty of the freeman can give him no part in the liberty of Chriſt, Col. iii. 10. 11.

As none are by us to be accounted ſubjects of this kingdom, but thoſe whom Chriſt commands us to reckon his diſciples, or that they are of the truth; ſo all that appear to be of this truth, without difference, are by us to be held for ſubjects of this kingdom, and to be dealt with accordingly; and becauſe ſome, under the common influence of the Spirit, receive the word with joy, and ſo appear for a while to be of this truth, who yet are not of it, and many of them afterward diſcover themſelves, or will be diſcovered and ſeparated from the people of Chriſt at his coming, Matth. xiii. & xxv. John xv. 2. 6. Matth. vii. 21.—29. 1 Tim. v. 24. 25. Heb. x. 39. Jude 4.; therefore there is a diſtinction made between the viſible and inviſible kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt: and the

the viſible is nothing elſe but the outward appearance of the inviſible, ſuch as it now makes, 1 John ii. 19. "They went "out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had "been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; "but they went out, that they might be made manifeſt, that "they were not all of us."

3. By this truth Chriſt's ſubjects are all diſtinguiſhed and differenced from all others, howſoever agreeing with them in other things, and however related to them, and bound together with them by many other ties. The church ſtands diſtinguiſhed from all other ſocieties, as has been noticed, bearing this motto, *The Lord our righteouſneſs*. This truth lies at the bottom of all that diviſion and enmity betwixt the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent, and of all that hatred of the men of this world at the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom: for whatever fair pretences the world may make for this hatred, yet our Lord tells us the true cauſe of it, when he ſays, John xvii. 14. "I have given them thy word; "and the world hath hated them, becauſe they are not of "the world, even as I am not of the world." The men of this world may love Chriſt's ſubjects on account of other things common to them with the world appearing about them; but as they appear to be of this truth, and keep the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, they cannot love them; neither do they hate them for thoſe ſame things that they find with others who are not of this truth, in whom yet they take pleaſure.

However we be joined with the people of Chriſt, if we be not with them in this, we are none of Chriſt's ſubjects, nor have we any part in the kingdom of Chriſt. And all ſeparations from the world, that flow not from this truth, are none of that controverſy which the Lord hath eſtabliſhed in the the earth between the ſeed of the woman and the ſerpent, and are not ſeparations from the world, but diviſions in it.

4. In this truth all Chriſt's ſubjects are one, however otherwiſe differenced. They are of different nations, different ſtations in the world, and of different parties in the world; they have different meaſures of gifts and grace, different meaſures of light, whence differences of opinion and practice will be found among them, and they are liable to error in many caſes while they are in this world; ſo that uniformity, in all theſe things, which ſome of them may judge very neceſſary, is not to be expected here; but herein they are all one, they are "every one of this truth,"

yea, even though they may have different ſpeculations abou it, and controverſies of words, while the truth itſelf reign in all their hearts.

This is that unity of the faith wherein all the members o the body of Chriſt, even the babes not very ſkilful in th word of righteouſneſs, are every one according to their mea ſure, growing up "unto the meaſure of the ſtature of th "fulneſs of Chriſt," Eph. iv.

Thus they are united by Chriſt's word, according to hi prayer to the Father, that they "may be one," John xvi 20. 21. "Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſ "which ſhall believe on me through their word: that the "all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee "that they alſo may be one in us: that the world may be "lieve that thou haſt ſent me." They are more cloſely join ed together in this truth, than they can be by any othe means whatſoever; and it is of more force to unite ther than any thing can be to divide them; ſo that it is impoſſi ble for any difference to break this union. Here is Chri their peace, on whom all their iniquities met, Iſ. liii. 6.; an his righteouſneſs, which is unto them all, and upon ther all without difference, and is the foundation of one and th ſame hope unto them all, Rom. iii. 22. Gal. iv. 5. 7. and v. 5. his blood, his croſs, whereby the enmity is ſlain, and the all reconciled to God in one body. By this truth they ar all made to drink into one Spirit, which they receive throug the hearing of faith, and are all related to God as their fa ther, and to Chriſt as their brother-ranſomer, their one Lor Redeemer. And in being of this truth, they are all united t Chriſt by it, as fellow-members of that one and ſame bod whereof he is the head; and though the members be man ways differenced, yet there is but one body, wherein all th members are growing up in this unity of the faith, and know ledge of the Son of God. Ought they not therefore to endea vour to "keep the unity of ſpirit in this bond of peace, for "bearing one another in love," as to other differences Should any party of them riſe up to oblige all others to un formity with them in matters of difference, and ſo to eſta bliſh another bond of peace, to the dividing of the body c Chriſt, which yet muſt remain united in this bond in ſpite c all differences? Or dare we exclude from the privileges c Chriſt's kingdom, and reject from our church-communion the leaſt of them that are of this truth, becauſe they follo not with us in our uniformity; and this after the only Lor

of the church has ſaid, "Every one that is of the truth, "heareth my voice?"

SECT. III.

THE hearing of Chriſt's voice, and being his ſubject, are the ſame thing; but we ſhall inquire a little more particularly concerning this his voice, which his ſubjects hear; and then concerning their hearing it.

As to the firſt of theſe; we may find the ſhort ſum of our Lord's voice to his people, in his commiſſion to the goſpel-miniſtry: Mark xvi. 15. 16. "And he ſaid unto them, Go "ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every "creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſa-"ved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned." Matth. xxviii. 18. 19. 20. "And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, "ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; "go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I "have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even "unto the end of the world. Amen."

And, 1. Chriſt's ſubjects hear his voice, preaching "peace "through his croſs to them that were afar off, and to them "that were nigh," Eph. ii. 17. "even the word of reconci-"liation," 2 Cor. v. 18.—21.

This preaching of the goſpel to every creature, this proclamation of peace, ſuppoſes a controverſy between God and them to whom it is ſent, and that they are thereby in a periſhing condition, from which they are uncapable to recover themſelves: "For the Son of man came to ſeek and to ſave "that which was loſt," and he "came not to call the righ-"teous, but ſinners to repentance." Wherefore, that ſinners may hearken to this word of ſalvation, they muſt know that "they have deſtroyed themſelves:" And becauſe they do not eaſily entertain ſuch a thought of themſelves, and ſo ſlight the glad news of ſalvation, they are awakened to hear them by the voice of the law, and its work upon their conſciences; the Lord Chriſt, by his Spirit, making the law ſubſervient to the goſpel, by this means, ſhutting up ſinners to the faith, and ſtopping their mouths, that they may be ſubject to the judgment of God, and ſo hearken to the glad tidings of ſalvation, Rom. iii. 19. & vii. 9. Gal. ii. 19. But when the law hath done its work upon the ſinner, he will not

not for all this hearken to the news of ſalvation, but deſpair, if he be not caſt into the mould of the goſpel-doctrine; for it is only they "that are of the truth, that have an ear to "hear Chriſt's voice;" and of the hearing of this voice, we have ſpoken already.

2. His ſubjects hear his voice in his commandments: "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have "commanded you."

He ſpeaks to his people in all his inſtitutions; all the ordinances of the goſpel are his voice. He hath appointed the goſpel-miniſtry, firſt extraordinary, for the firſt erection of the church, the firſt joining together of the ſaints in the body of Chriſt, which miniſtry is now ceaſed; and then ordinary, for the edifying of this body of Chriſt, by adding the elect unto it, and building them up in it in all ages unto the end of the world, Eph. iv. 11. 12. 13. He hath commanded them to preach and teach, and to baptize the diſciples, and their infants, (who are to be reckoned by us in the ſame ſtate with them), with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, Matth. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 38. 39. 1 Cor. vii. 14. Mark x. 13. 14. He hath inſtituted the great ordinance of his ſupper, to be obſerved in the churches, or worſhipping congregations of the ſaints, who are one bread and one body in the communion of that bread which they break, and that cup which they bleſs, which is the communion of the body and blood of Chriſt; even as that bread and cup is his body and blood, 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20. 23.—26. 1 Cor. x. 15.—18. A goſpel-church is his inſtitution, with its officers, elders, or biſhops, and deacons, Phil. i. 1. and its diſcipline, Matth. xviii. 15.—20. 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. 5.—8. And in ſuch a church, his diſciples, made ſo by the influence of the word, are to continue "ſtedfaſtly in the go-"ſpel-doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, "and in prayers, and in praiſing God, glorifying the Father "of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with one mind, in one mouth," Acts ii. 41. 42. 47. Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7. "Not forſaking the "aſſembling of themſelves together, but conſidering one an-"other to provoke unto love and good works, and exhort-"ing one another," Heb. x. 23. 24. 25. And this is the moſt eminent mean of our worſhipping in the heavenly ſanctuary, while we are here upon the earth, Heb. x. 19.—25. He hath alſo changed the ſabbath from the ſeventh to the firſt day of the Jewiſh week, when he finiſhed his work, and entered into his reſt in the new creation, even as God reſted from all

his

his works in the firſt creation; ſo that this day remains as the ſabbath of the people of God, Col. ii. 16. Heb. iv. 3. 8. 9. 10. Acts xx. 7. Rev. i. 10.

Chriſt ſpeaks to his people in the moral law, which he hath explained and delivered to his people, as their Lord Redeemer, and which "he writes on their hearts." The leaſt of his commandments muſt be great and precious, as they are his, unto his people: and "he that breaks the leaſt of them, "and teacheth men ſo, is leaſt in the kingdom of heaven;" his people muſt be taught "to obſerve all things whatſoever "he commands them." But there are ſome things much inſiſted on, and vehemently preſſed upon his people, in the New Teſtament, which were not ſo clearly revealed, nor ſo much inculcated before, and which are eſpecially ſuited to the New-Teſtament revelation: as, for inſtance, the "command to "deny ourſelves, and take our croſs, and follow Chriſt," Matth. xvi. 24. 25.; the command "to love our enemies, to "bleſs them that curſe us, to do good to them that hate us, "and to pray for them which deſpitefully uſe us and perſe-"cute us," Matth. v. 44. Luke ix. 51.—56.; and the command "to call on the name of the Lord Jeſus, and to aſk of "the Father in his name," John xvi. 24. Rom. x. 13. 14.; and "to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by a "new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us, "through the vail, that is to ſay, his fleſh," Heb. x. 19. 20. 22.

But we have a commandment in the New Teſtament, whereby the ſincerity of all our obedience is to be tried, and whereby diſtinction is eſpecially made betwixt Chriſt's ſubjects and the ſeed of the ſerpent, or the children of the devil; and we have this commandment, 1 John iii. 23. "And this "is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name "of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another, as he gave "us commandment." Chriſt gave this commandment of charity or brotherly love to his diſciples, when about to leave them, John xiii. 34. 35. "A new commandment I give un-"to you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, "that ye alſo love one another. By this ſhall all men know "that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another." This love is plainly diſtinct from that love which, by the law of nature, we are bound to have to all men, and which is alſo injoined us by Jeſus Chriſt: for after the entrance of ſin, the Lord laid the foundation of this brotherly love among the woman's ſeed, in that intimation of his deſign to put enmity betwixt

betwixt the two ſeeds, and our Lord commands his diſciples to love one another, "even as he has loved them." This love is alſo diſtinct from that peculiar love that God's peculiar people, the members of the commonwealth of Iſrael after the fleſh, were bound to have toward one another as brethren by the law, as it was delivered to them: for this is a peculiar love among the diſciples, Jews or Gentiles, wherewith they love one another, "even as he hath loved them."

Our Lord calls this his *new commandment.* And it may be called new on theſe accounts: (1.) Becauſe the love here required has a new object: "Every one that is of the truth." Every one of the redeemed unto God by the blood of the Lamb, out of every nation, is to be loved with this love, wherewith Chriſt would have his people to love one another, even as he hath loved them. He hath ſlain the enmity betwixt theſe two, Jew and Gentile, and hath taken them down, and made them up again into one new man in himſelf. This one new man is the adequate object of this love, and ſo it is new, Eph. ii. 14. 15. 16. (2.) Becauſe there is a new reaſon for it: "Even as I have loved you." 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down "his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the "brethren." 1 John iv. 9. 10. 11. "And this is his com-"mandment to whom the Father hath given authority to ex-"ecute judgment, becauſe he is the Son of man," John v. 27. As it was ſaid to the children of Iſrael, "I am the Lord "thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; "thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf;" ſo here he ſays, "A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one "another, as I have loved you." (3.) Becauſe obedience to this commandment is a ſpecial fruit of the New-Teſtament Spirit, the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt conforming us to him in his love to his people: "Therefore," ſays he, "as I have lo-"ved you, that ye alſo love one another." And John xv. 12. 13. "This is my commandment, That ye love one an-"other, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man "than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is pointed out as the ſpecial fruit we bring forth, by "abiding in him, as the branch in the vine," ℣ 4. 5. 8. 10. (4.) Becauſe it is the trying command of the New Teſtament, whereby the Lord puts a difference betwixt his ſubjects and the reſt of the world: for by means of this he makes "it "manifeſt in their own conſciences by his Spirit, that they "are his," 1 John iii. 18.—24. And by this he would have his

his diſciples manifeſt in the world; therefore he prays to the Father, "that they may be one, that the world may believe "that the Father hath ſent him," John xvii. 21. And by this he will diſtinguiſh his people from the world, "when he "executes judgment at his coming," Matth. xxv. 31.—46. "And then the world ſhall know, that the Father hath loved "them as he has loved him," John xvii. 23. So he ſays, "By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye "have love one to another."

With reſpect to this law, putting the difference betwixt the children of God and the children of the devil, believers are called "righteous:" 1 John iii. 7. "Little children, let no "man deceive you: he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, "even as he is righteous." Jeſus Chriſt is righteous, in the perfect obedience he gave unto the law of eternal life and death, in the room and ſtead of his people; and this is the righteouſneſs whereby they are juſtified, and ſtand for ever as children, in the Father's favour and love, with Jeſus Chriſt his Son, who kept his commandments, and continues in his love. And he "that doth righteouſneſs," is ſaid "to be righteous, "even as he is righteous." Righteouſneſs muſt reſpect a law, againſt which if a man ſin, he cannot properly be called righteous with reſpect to that law; and here believers are called righteous with reference unto a law againſt which they do not ſin, ℣ 4. 5. 6. "Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſeth alſo "the law; for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law. And ye "know that he was manifeſted to take away our ſins; and "in him is no ſin. Whoſoever abideth in him, ſinneth not; "whoſoever ſinneth, hath not ſeen him, neither known him." The law with reſpect to which believers are righteous in doing righteouſneſs, cannot be that with reſpect to which Chriſt is perfectly righteous, and they in him their head. For though there be none that give any true obedience to the commands of that law but they, yet they ſin agai ſt them daily; and ſo they are not righteous with reſpect to that law, in their doing the righteouſneſs of it. But the Apoſtle plainly points here to the Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, as the Lord himſelf doth, when he ſays, John xv. 10. "If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love; "even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and a- "bide in his love." See ℣ 11.—14. 17. "Theſe things I "command you, that ye love one another." For the Apoſtle tells us, 1 John iii. 8. 9. 10. 11. "He that committeth ſin, "is of the devil; for the devil ſinneth from the beginning.

" For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that
" might deſtroy the works of the devil. Whoſoever is bo
" of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth
" him: and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.
" this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children
" the devil: Whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs, is not of G
" neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the m
" ſage that ye heard from the beginning, that we ſhould l
" one another." It is plainly the enmity and hatred of
devil and his children, againſt the woman's ſeed, that is h
called *ſin*, as it is alſo John viii. 34. 37. 38. 44. And i
love to the woman's ſeed, love to our brethren in Chriſt
his ſake, that is here called *righteouſneſs*. But it cannot
the perfection of this love which is in Jeſus Chriſt the ri
teous, nor ſuch meaſures of it as are to be found with ſ
eminent ſaints only, that is here intended: for ſome of
children of God have it not in this reſpect. But the Ap
here ſpeaks of a law, againſt which " none that are bor
" God can ſin, becauſe the ſeed of God remains in the
And that is the law requiring that we have this love on
another, to difference us from the children of the devil,
have not this love at all, nor can have it, becauſe they
not born of God, but hate and perſecute God's child
None of the children of God ſin againſt this law; for "
" have purified their ſouls in obeying the truth, through
" Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren; being bo
" gain of the incorruptible ſeed of the word, which ren
" eth in them:" So that they cannot be deſtitute of
love altogether, as the children of the devil are, nor hat
brethren as they do, and ſo cannot ſin againſt this differen
law, ℣ 12.—15. " Not as Cain, who was of that wicked
" and ſlew his brother. And wherefore ſlew he him?
" cauſe his own works were evil, and his brother's right
" Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.
" know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſ
" love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, ab
" in death. Whoſoever hateth his brother, is a murd
" and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life ab
" in him."

The more we do of this righteouſneſs, the more ful
dence we have of our being the children of God, and
the more of thoſe manifeſtations of his love that are pro
to them that keep his commandments, John xiv. an
And becauſe there is ſo little of the labour of this love

is the fruit of faith, yea ſo little acceſs to perform the duties of this love in a conſtant way, through the neglect of Chriſt's great inſtitution for that end, Matth. xviii. 15.—20. Acts ii. 41. 42. therefore thoſe manifeſtations are ſo little known, as they were at the beginning, when faith and this love was lively, and when it could be ſaid of believers in the churches, whoſe faith in the Lord Jeſus, and love unto all the ſaints, might be heard of, "After that ye believed, ye were "ſealed with that Holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance," Eph. i. 13. 14. 15.

3. Chriſt's ſubjects hear his voice in his threatenings: "He "that believeth not, ſhall be damned." See further theſe inſtances of goſpel-threatenings, Matth. vii. 21.—27. Luke xiii. 24.—27. Matth. xxv. Matth. xviii. 6. 17. 18 32.—35. John xv. 2. Heb. ii. 1. 2. 3. and vi. 3.—8. and x. 23.—31. 38. and xii. 25. 28. 29. 2 Pet. ii. 20. 21. and the threatenings to the churches, Rev. ii. and iii.

His threatenings are his voice as well as his promiſes. And if his ſubjects be not they that hear this voice of his, who are they then that give it a ſuitable hearing? This voice of Chriſt is very uſeful to his people, to keep them from carnal ſecurity and ſelf-confidence, and to move them to hold faſt the grace of his kingdom, "whereby they may ſerve God ac-"ceptably, with reverence and godly fear." For even their "God is a conſuming fire." It is far from being an evidence of unbelief or ſelf righteouſneſs, to be poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and to tremble at God's word. And they that hearken not to the voice of Chriſt's threatenings, while ſin and ſelf remain in them, will very ſoon give little ear to the word of his grace, and be little under the influence of it. Paul knew as much of free grace, and of the everlaſting righteouſneſs brought in by Chriſt, as any in our day; and he did not think that he was doing any thing inconſiſtent with it, when he kept "under his body, and was bringing it into ſubjection, "leſt that by any means, when he had preached to others, "he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away," 1 Cor. ix. 24.—27.

4. Chriſt's ſubjects hear his voice in his promiſes: "He "that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved." See Rom. x. 8.—13. John vi. 37. 1 John v. 11. 12. 13.

This is the great promiſe of the goſpel, wherein all that is promiſed is the reward of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, the only foundation of our title to all the promiſes: and then only can we have ſolid hopes of enjoying the good things promiſed, when we look upon them as the reward of his righteouſneſs;

yet ſo as we muſt always attend to this tenor of the promiſes, "teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have "commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the "end of the world. And if ye keep my commandments, ye "ſhall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's "commandments, and abide in his love."

The goſpel contains "the promiſes of this life, and of that "which is to come;" and godlineſs has theſe promiſes. See the tenor, firſt, of the promiſes of this life: "Take no "thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat? or, What ſhall we "drink? or, Wherewithal ſhall we be clothed? But ſeek ye "firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all "theſe things ſhall be added unto you. Take therefore no "thought for the morrow; for the morrow ſhall take thought "for the things of itſelf: ſufficient unto the day is the evil "thereof," Matth vi. 31.—34. Unto this promiſe the Apoſtle ſeems to refer, when he ſays, That "godlineſs has "the promiſe of the life that now is." See 1 Tim. iv. 7.——10. We have alſo ſomething like a promiſe of this life in our Lord's ſaying, "That there is no man that hath left "houſe and lands —— for his ſake and the goſpel's, but he "ſhall receive an hundred-fold now in this time houſes, and "lands, with perſecutions; and in the world to come, eter-"nal life," Mark x. 28. 29. 30. But there are other ſorts of promiſes made out unto Chriſt's ſubjects in this world; ſuch as, the promiſe of Chriſt's being always preſent with his miniſters in teaching, and with his people in obſerving all things that he commands; and that promiſe, John xiv. 23. and the promiſes to the churches. See the promiſe to Philadelphia, Rev iii. 10. "Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of "my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of temp-"tation." We muſt next conſider the tenor of the promiſe of the life that is to come, which is the main promiſe of the goſpel, the earthly inheritance being now done away, and the promiſe of Chriſt's coming in the fleſh being now fulfilled. See Rev. iii. 21. "To him that overcometh will I "grant to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, "and am ſet down with my Father in his throne." John xii. 25. 26. Rom. viii. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 58 "Be ſtedfaſt, unmove-"able, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſ-"much as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord." Col. iii. 23. 24. "And whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, as "unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the "Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance: for

"ye

"ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt." Rev. xxii. 14. Our Lord ſays, Matth. vii. "He that heareth my ſayings, and doth them, is "like unto a man which built his houſe on a rock; and when "the ſtorm came, it fell not, becauſe it was founded on a "rock." His people cannot periſh in the judgment, but will be eternally ſaved, becauſe founded on him, the only rock of ſalvation. But every one founded there keeps his ſayings; and ſo their title to the promiſed ſalvation is manifeſt. He repreſents himſelf, Matth. xxv. ſpeaking thus to his people in the judgment: "Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the "kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the "world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirſty, "and ye gave me drink," &c. The kingdom was ſure to them by an eternal purpoſe of free grace in Chriſt. But their keeping of Chriſt's ſayings manifeſts their intereſt in this grace; and ſo the promiſes run in this tenor.

Grace and duty harmoniſe pleaſantly in the word; but ſince they have been ſet at odds by the ſubtilty of Satan, and the corruptions of men, the glory of both, which appears brighteſt in their due connection, has been very much darkened; and both contending parties ſeem to have loſt, each of them, a conſiderable part of the word, with the benefit of it, in the contention. If I durſt preſume to offer a text to the conſideration of both parties, that might be of great uſe to them, it ſhould be that word, Jam. ii. 22. "Seeſt thou how faith "wrought with his works, and by works was faith made "perfect?" They that have a zeal for works, and magnify them, as it were, upon the diſparagement of grace, and Chriſt's righteouſneſs revealed in the truth of the goſpel, and ſo give out that truth with great caution, as if they were afraid of it, and that will not let themſelves or others ſee much in the goſpel, but commands, and promiſes to the keeping of theſe commands, had need to underſtand and ſee how faith wrought with Abraham's works, when he offered up his ſon, and to endeavour to make it manifeſt to others, when they preſs any duty. Now, the faith that wrought with Abraham's works was this, "God will provide himſelf a lamb "for a burnt-offering," Gen. xxii. 8. And if they would "teſtify in the Lord," Eph. iv. 17. and exhort us "by the "Lord Jeſus," 1 Theſſ. iv. 1. 2. and beſeech us "by the "mercies of God," Rom. xii. 1. "and knowing the terror "of the Lord, perſuade us," 2 Cor. v. 11. when they tell us "how we ought to walk and pleaſe God," no man could juſtly find fault with them. On the other hand, they that

ſhew

ſhew a great zeal for grace, and love only to hear or preach of abſolute promiſes, and to preſs our aſſurance of abſolute promiſes in believing the goſpel, and that give out the commandments of the Lord Jeſus, and promiſes made to the keeping of them, with great caution, as if they were afraid of them, would be nothing the worſe, though they ſaw and conſidered well, and did their beſt to let others ſee, "how by "works faith is made perfect:" for by works Abraham's faith was thus confirmed, and, in ſome meaſure, reached its end. "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and "behold, a ram caught in a thicket. —— And Abraham "called the name of that place Jehovah jireh. —— And the "angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven "the ſecond time, and ſaid, By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith "the Lord, for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt "not with-held thy ſon, thine only ſon, that in bleſſing I will "bleſs thee," Gen. xxii. 13.—17. And when they teſtify the goſpel of the grace of God, they may alſo earneſtly exhort us, to ſhew conſtant diligence in the work and labour of love "unto the full aſſurance of hope unto the end; and "that we be not ſlothful, but followers of them who "through faith and patience inherit the promiſes." For when God made promiſe to Abraham, "becauſe he could ſwear by "no greater, he ſware by himſelf, ſaying, Surely, bleſſing, I "will bleſs thee. —— Wherein God willing more abundantly "to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his "counſel, confirmed it by an oath," Heb. vi. 10.—18. And thus by works our faith would be made perfect, and we would learn "to hold faith and a good conſcience; which "ſome putting away, concerning faith make ſhipwreck," 1 Tim. i. 19.

If our preachers would look with both eyes upon both parts of this ſame text, "Seeſt thou how faith wrought "with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" there would not be ſo much encouragement given, on the one hand, to the natural inclination that is in us to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of our own, and ſo much offence to them that "love the truth as it is in Jeſus;" nor, on the other hand, ſo much encouragement to a ſort of profeſſors of the truth, that would take joy from the goſpel, and triumph in their knowledge of the way of righteouſneſs, and in the exerciſe of their gifts, while at the ſame time they ſlight the commandments of Jeſus Chriſt, walk after the fleſh, and exerciſe not "themſelves to keep conſciences void of offence to-

"ward

" ward God and toward men;" and will " not take up " their croſs, and follow Chriſt."

Preachers of natural religion, with the wiſdom of words, will be magnified by the Sadducees; and preachers of a zeal of God, but not according to the knowledge of the righteouſneſs of God revealed in the goſpel, will be magnified by the Phariſees; and preachers of grace, or of faith, without works, the fruits of it, and without exhorting and warning every one how he ought to walk, and to pleaſe God, will be delightful to them that boaſt in " faith without works;" and they that ſhun not to " declare the whole counſel of God," will pleaſe no party of this world; yet " they are unto God " a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in " them that periſh; and every one that is of the truth, will " hear Chriſt's voice."

But we muſt proceed now to conſider what it is to " hear " Chriſt's voice." And, 1. To hear Chriſt's voice is to diſcern it. Chriſt's ſubjects that are of the truth, and ſo have an ear to hear Chriſt's voice, have another ſort of diſcerning of his voice than other men are capable of. " The natural " man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe " they are ſpiritually diſcerned." He takes up all that Chriſt ſays, in a natural way, accommodates it all to his natural way of thinking; and ſo far as he imagines it to be according to that, ſo far he underſtands it, and no further: but if he apprehend that there is any thing more in it, he underſtands it not, " it is fooliſhneſs to him," becauſe it is not according to his wiſdom; and ſo he diſcerns not the voice of Chriſt at all. For the things that Chriſt ſays, are the things of God's deep wiſdom, which man knew not; and which the Spirit, that ſearcheth all things, reveals not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but in words fitted by him to expreſs ſpiritual things.

The natural man goes about to judge this by his wiſdom; for he has no other way of judging; but he that is ſpiritual, or he that is of the truth, and ſo has an ear to hear Chriſt's voice, " judgeth all the things that Chriſt ſays; he knows his " voice," underſtands his meaning, having heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in him; he has faith, the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things hoped for; the eyes of his underſtanding are enlightened, " to know " what is the hope of God's calling, and what is the riches of " the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints; and he is tranſ- " formed by the renewing of his mind, that he may prove " what

" what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of " God;" and he " knows the terror of the Lord;" ſo he judges all the things that Chriſt ſays. Yet herein he is not ſubject to man's judgment: for he judgeth of things above all man's wiſdom: " For who hath known the mind of the " Lord, that he may inſtruct him? But," ſays the Apoſtle, " we have the mind of Chriſt," 1 Cor. ii. See ℣ 13.—16.

They that are of the truth, and " have taſted that the Lord " is gracious, do as new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk " of the word," and they ſuck in that ſincere milk, " that " they may grow thereby," 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2. 3. But others ſeek the word, and a meaning of it, to anſwer this and the other corrupt end and deſign; and they delight in it, as they conceive it ſuited unto that end: ſo, if they grow by it, they grow monſters in religion. They taſte not that ſincere milk to grow up thereby unto eternal life; they take the word only as it makes for their purpoſe. And this is the way in all the perverſe diſputings of them that uſe the word to ſerve their party-deſigns, and their pride, envy, and malice againſt one another: they rejoice in the word, as it ſeems to hit their adverſary, and as they conceive it makes for their party: but the ſincere milk of the word they know not, they love not. However Chriſt's ſubjects may be for a time, or in ſome things, carried out this way, yet this is no mark of his ſubjects.

They that are of the truth, diſtinguiſh Chriſt's voice: " His " ſheep follow him; for they know his voice: and a ſtran- " ger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of " ſtrangers," John x. 4. 5. They can diſtinguiſh his voice from enthuſiaſtic imaginations, and the language of a falſe ſpirit, from the language of nature and man's wiſdom, and from the doctrines and commandments of men: for though there may be ſuperſtition in them, and though they may be inſlaved in many things to men, and afraid to doubt that their doctrines and commandments are the word of Chriſt; yet they do not ſee that glory in man's words that they ſee in thoſe words of Chriſt which they diſcern: " For what is " the chaff to the wheat?" Chriſt's people may be keeping, in notion, and ſome way in practice, the word of man, and yet have ſome diſcerning of, and inclination to obſerve the word of Chriſt, directly contrary to what they are keeping of the word of man; though they do not ſee the inconſiſtency; and ſo are driven into great difficulties about keeping the word of Chriſt and man's word together.

2. Chriſt's

2. Chriſt's people hear his voice; their conſciences are ſubject to it, they receive it, and embrace it, on account of his authority, as the rule of their faith and obedience, of their fears and hopes.

They hear his voice as it is the voice of their Lord Redeemer. They have a ſenſe of his authority in his voice, and their minds and wills are ſubjected to it. It is enough to them that he ſays ſo, without aſking any further queſtions about it; and thus they hear his voice of whom the Father hath ſaid, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well "pleaſed; hear ye him." Chriſt hath not ſubjected the conſciences of his ſubjects to any other authority beſides his own; yea, he has diſcharged his diſciples "to call any man "maſter." He would not have any of his diſciples called "Rabbi; becauſe one is their maſter, even Chriſt, and all "they are brethren," Matth. xxiii. 8.—12. His miniſters, that bring his word to his people, "are not to preach themſelves their lords, but Chriſt Jeſus their Lord, and themſelves their ſervants," in repreſenting the authority of Chriſt in his word unto them. They have no authority of their own over the conſciences of the diſciples; and however the diſciples may be in many things inſlaved even by them, yet Chriſt hath made them free. And this their ſlavery is no evidence of their ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt: for their ſubjection to him, evidences itſelf in a reſpect to his authority in his word, in oppoſition to all that ſtands in competition with it; and though his mind ſhould be many ways miſtaken by his ſubjects, yet a regard to his authority, in holding what they take to be his mind, in oppoſition to the authority of man, is a better evidence of their hearing his voice, than the obſerving the things that he ſays, on the account of no other authority but that of man.

Some ſeem to receive Chriſt's word on the account of the reaſonableneſs of what they think he ſays; and ſo it is not his voice they hear, but the voice of their own reaſon. Some receive what he ſays, becauſe of impreſſions made upon them, as they take it, by his Spirit; and they take no further heed to what he ſays in his word, than as they find it impreſſed upon them: thus they hear not his voice in the ſcripture-revelation, but the voice of theſe impreſſions; and they take not the whole word of Chriſt as it is his, but the word as they find it impreſſed, for their rule. Yet the Spirit of Chriſt is the ſame Spirit that indited the ſcriptures; and he that is born of God, heareth the ſcriptures, and Chriſt's voice in them; and

when the Holy Ghoſt leads us into all truth, "he brings "all things to our remembrance, whatſoever Chriſt hath ſaid "unto us; and he ſpeaks not of himſelf, but glorifies Chriſt:" ſo that they that are under his influence are ſubjected to the authority of Chriſt in his word, and receive his word as it is his. Some again receive the things that Chriſt ſays, on account of the authority of man; and many hear not the voice of Chriſt, but the voice of prevailing cuſtom, and the traditions of their fathers; and the voice of the world, the voice of the generality of the wiſe and learned, or the voice of the godly, goes farther with the moſt part than the voice of Jeſus Chriſt in his word: for where they find Chriſt ſaying any thing in his word, and none ſaying with him, they cannot hear him. So far as his diſciples give way to theſe things, ſo far their ſubjection to him appears not.

They that are ſubject to Chriſt's authority in his word, and entertain his voice, as the rule of their faith and obedience, fears and hopes, ſhew a regard to all that he ſays, all that he teſtifies, commands, promiſes, or threatens. The leaſt thing he ſays has weight with them; and what he is moſt in ſaying, they are moſt in hearing. They regard all his commandments; and are not as the Phariſees, exceedingly zealous in the leaſt things, which they ought alſo to do, and paſſing over "the weightier "matters of the law." They do not cut and carve upon the words and commandments of Jeſus Chriſt, to ſhun what may endamage their worldly intereſt, and to receive only what they may keep without difficulty and hazard, and what they blindly judge abſolutely neceſſary unto their ſalvation, or perhaps what they find abſolutely neceſſary to maintain their credit among the party of Chriſtians that they have to do with.

Chriſt's ſubjects "delight in the law" of their "Lord after "the inward man," and ſo they hear his voice without conſtraint; but there is "another law in their members" continually "warring againſt the law of their minds;" ſo that it is no wonder if this their hearing of Chriſt's voice be very much marred: yet ſo far as they are of the truth, he is unto them the only Lord of their faith, of their conſcience, of ſin and duty, of their fear and of their hope. Thus "every one "that is of the truth hears his voice."

3. Chriſt's ſubjects keep his ſayings, and do the things that he ſays; and ſo they hear his voice. They believe his teſtimony, they tremble at his word of threatening, they hope in his word of promiſe, and they obſerve and do what he commands.

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He is highly offended with them that call him "Lord, and "do not the things that he ſays." Luke vi. 46. "Why "call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I "ſay?" Men may be ſo far under the influence of his Spirit, as to be thereby enabled to call him "Lord," 1 Cor. xii. 3. and ſo be joined with his people in the profeſſion; and yet not do the things that he ſays: therefore they are called "branches in him, not bearing fruit," John xv. 2. Theſe may be, as far as man's eye ſees, doing what he ſays, and ſo be accounted his ſubjects: yet they are not doing the very things he ſays, but the appearance of them: They do not obey him in that faith which worketh by love, and which is the evidence of things not ſeen, the ſubſtance of things hoped for; and ſo, not having root in themſelves, they wither, and bring forth no fruit to perfection. But every one that is of the truth, in the leaſt meaſure, does, according to that meaſure, obey the commandments of Jeſus Chriſt.

His ſubjects are not yet wholly of the truth. There remains a corrupt principle of unbelief and enmity in their ſouls, while they are in this world, from which the truth in them meets with continual oppoſition, as it does alſo from the temptations of Satan and of the world; "ſo that when they "would do good, evil is preſent with them; and they can-"not do the things that they would; yea, the evil that they "would not, that they do," Rom. vii. 19.—24. Gal. v. 17. Therefore all that obedience is very much to be ſuſpected, that meets with no oppoſition from within a man's ſelf; and it is no wonder to ſee a Phariſee going on without difficulty, and very ſmoothly, in his obedience of the letter, while they that are of the truth, and according to their meaſure hearing Chriſt's voice, find the greateſt reaſon in themſelves to cry out, "O wretched man!" and, through the power of temptation, and of the fleſh, fall many times, even in the courſe of their external obedience; which is the reaſon for Chriſt's inſtitution of diſcipline in the churches of the ſaints, for the honour of his name, and of his truth in the world: "And "the righteous falleth ſeven times, and riſeth up again; but "the wicked ſhall fall into miſchief." Yet the Phariſee is walking only after the fleſh; he has not the Spirit of Jeſus, nor the truth, to make head againſt it; and he is alive without the law; therefore he goes on ſmoothly in his carnal ſelfiſh obedience: but they that are of the truth, notwithſtanding of all their eſcapes and ſtumblings, are the only perſons in the world that move a ſtep in the way of Chriſt's

commandments. They only are hearty in this obedience, and ſpiritual, doing the very truth of the things that Chriſt requires; they only do the things that he ſays, becauſe he ſays them, and are honeſtly aiming at the glory of his name in the doing of them, and at perfection, in obedience to all his commandments without exception; none but they are truly "denying themſelves, taking up their croſs, and following "Chriſt;" and they only ſin not againſt that law whereby the children of God and the children of the devil are manifeſt.

It is much to be lamented, that, even among them that have more than the common profeſſion of Chriſtian religion, and that have learned ſome way to call Chriſt Lord, there appears at this day ſo little doing of the things that Chriſt ſays, ſo much conformity to a preſent world, and ſo little conformity to Jeſus Chriſt, ſo little ſelf-denial, and patient bearing the croſs after him, ſo little good-will and forgiveneſs to enemies, and ſo very little brotherly love, and charity, and mercy to the poor: and theſe are ſad evidences that the truth, as it is in Chriſt, has either very little poſſeſſion in our hearts, or that it is not in us, and that we receive not the love of it. Though there be many that renounce the groſs profaneneſs of the publicans and harlots, and the looſe principles of the Sadducees, and have learned "to pray long, and "even to faſt," and that have a fair ſhew of giving alms, ſo as to maintain their credit; yet the truth of Chriſt's doctrine, about the impoſſibility of ſerving God and Mammon, laying up for ourſelves "treaſures in heaven, and not on earth, that "our hearts may be where our treaſure is," and about ſeeking "firſt the kingdom of God, and taking no thought for "to-morrow," and about "giving to the poor," Matth. vi. Luke xvi. is fully as ridiculous to them unto this day, as it was at firſt to the Phariſees: Luke xvi. 14. 15. "And "the Phariſees alſo, who were covetous, heard all theſe "things, and they derided him. And he ſaid unto them, "Ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before men; but God "knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly eſteemed "amongſt men, is abomination in the ſight of God."

But Chriſt's ſheep hear his voice, and he knows them, and they follow him, and he gives unto them "eternal life, and "they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of "his hand."

SECT.

SECT. IV.

WE come now to conſider the connection betwixt being of the truth, and hearing Chriſt's voice. And this may be ſome way cleared to us in conſidering theſe following things.

1. Chriſt's title to rule over us, his authority and right to command us, is manifeſt in this truth concerning his righteouſneſs revealed in the goſpel. Therefore, when he appears in the midſt of the throne, as head over all things to the church, and takes the book to looſe it, and to order and diſpoſe of all things about the church, Rev. v. we find the redeemed brought in acknowledging him worthy "to take "the book, and to open the ſeals." And why? "For," ſay they, "thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by "thy blood." The Lord's authority over Iſrael, and his right to command them, was manifeſt in his redeeming them from the Egyptian bondage; and much more is his authority and right to govern his people manifeſt in the eternal redemption he has now wrought for them, which is the ſubject of this truth of which they are. He is the good ſhepherd that laid down his life for the ſheep, and has taken it again for them; ſo they are his own, and they hear his voice, and follow him. They that know him in this truth, will be obliged to own, with Thomas, that he is "their Lord, and their "God;" and to reckon, "that they are not their own, but "bought with a price; and therefore bound to glorify him "in their bodies and ſpirits, which are his." For a man to be of this truth, and yet not ſubject to, nor acknowledge the authority of Chriſt the Redeemer, is as great an inconſiſtency as can be thought of.

2. The things he ſays are all ſuitable unto this truth, and all his commandments are according to it: "Therefore they "that are of this truth muſt hear his voice." This truth is evidently ſet forth in all the inſtitutions of the goſpel, which he commands his people to obſerve, and in all the New-Teſtament worſhip. The preaching of the goſpel is the preaching of Chriſt crucified. Baptiſm is the waſhing away of our ſins in the blood of Chriſt, the anſwer of a good conſcience toward God by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, and our being buried with him unto death, that like as he was raiſed up from the dead, we ſhould walk in newneſs of life; and as many as are baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, are baptized into his

his death. The Lord's ſupper evidently ſets forth his body broken for us, his blood ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins; and the communion of his diſciples in a goſpel-church in partaking together, as one body, of that one bread and cup, is the communion of the body and blood of Jeſus Chriſt; and "therein we ſhew forth his death till he come." The Chriſtian ſabbath is our joyful reſt in that work finiſhed by him who is now entered into his reſt.

What are our prayers, if they be not our calling on the name of the Lord our righteouſneſs, and aſking the Father in his name? And what are our praiſes, if they be not aſcriptions of glory to the Lamb that was ſlain, and thankſgivings unto the Father by him? And what is all the New-Teſtament worſhip, if it be not our drawing near to the Father by one Spirit through him, "who has reconciled us to God in one "body by the croſs," and our coming into the holieſt by his blood, and through the vail of his fleſh? The aſſemblies of his people in the churches, are their gathering together unto him, and in his name, "who is the Lord their righteouſ-"neſs, to ſee the glory and feel the power of his croſs." The government of a goſpel-church is a repreſentation of the authority of the great ſhepherd of the ſheep, that was brought again from the dead, by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, unto his ſheep: for it is the feeding of his ſheep. And the life of the diſcipline is their agreeing to call on the name of the Lord their righteouſneſs, and to aſk in his name, that he may do what they thus do in his name. Thus this truth is written upon the inſtitutions of the goſpel. Further, all the obedience that Chriſt requireth of us, is according to this truth; ſo that it is a "walking in the truth," 2 John 4. Chriſt hath ſhewed us in this truth what is good, in anſwer to that perplexing queſtion, "What ſhall I give for the ſin "of my ſoul? and wherewithal ſhall I come before God?" And what he requires of us is very agreeable to that good: He calls us "to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk "humbly with our God," Mic. vi. 6. 7. 8. He becomes our God only in and by this truth; and when he calls us to do juſtly, and love mercy, it is moſt agreeable to the revelation of his mercy and juſtice in this truth: and whereas, in ſhewing us this good, he ſtains the pride of all our glory, and glorifies himſelf exceedingly in our ſalvation by that ſacrifice of his own providing; it is every way agreeable to this, that we "ſhould walk humbly with our God." All our obedience to Chriſt is our conformity unto the image and glory

glory of God, as it is repreſented unto us in this truth; therefore we find the apoſtles frequently repreſenting the ſuitableneſs of what they require in Chriſt's name unto this truth. And if we look to the great goſpel-commandments of "ſelf-denial," and "bearing the croſs, love to enemies, "love to one another, as Chriſt has loved us," *&c.* we may eaſily ſee how they all relate to this truth; and therefore they that are of the truth, muſt hear his voice in them. The things that he forbids are the iniquities that he ſuffered for in his death; and that which he requires is, that we ſhould follow him in that wherein he is our righteouſneſs; and his threatenings are all to move us to cleave faſt to this truth, and walk ſuitably to it; and they will be accompliſhed on them that ſlight this truth, and them that are not of it.

3. The moſt excellent motives unto the obedience that Chriſt requires, are fetched from this truth, and are contained in it. See 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. "For the love of Chriſt "conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died "for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that "they which live, ſhould not henceforth live to themſelves, "but unto him which died for them, and roſe again." We ſee motives brought from this truth to influence us to our duty in the relations wherein we are placed in the world. See, for inſtance, Eph. v. 25. "Huſbands, love your wives, "even as Chriſt alſo loved the church, and gave himſelf for "it." We may alſo take notice how ſtrongly the Apoſtle preſſes charity, and rich liberality to the poor, by this truth, 2 Cor. viii. 9. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." If we ſpeak of the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, and of the holineſs of God, and his wrath due to ſin, as a motive to obedience, it is no where to be ſeen unto ſuch advantage as in this truth; and if we ſpeak of the hope of acceptance with God, and of a reward to encourage us under all the fears and difficulties that may caſt up to us about ſerving God and obeying him, this is no where to be found in the world but in this truth; and if we ſpeak of the pleaſure and delight that is to be found in the way of duty, whence flows all that joy but from this truth? or can they that take not reſt in this truth, find "Chriſt's yoke eaſy, and his burden light?"

Motives brought from this truth are the moſt powerful; for the revelation of this truth is the great contrivance of infinite wiſdom for bringing ſinful men to obedience; and

therefore

therefore it muſt be effectual in all them who are of this truth. And all other motives without this will be of no force to engage us to do the things that Chriſt ſays.

4. In this truth is found a deliverance from, and the victory over every thing that ſtands in the way to hinder their keeping the commandments of Jeſus Chriſt, who are of the truth: 1 John v. 3.—6. "For this is the love of God, that we keep "his commandments: and his commandments are not grie-"vous. For whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the "world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, "even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, "but he that believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God? This "is he that came by water and blood, even Jeſus Chriſt; "not by water only, but by water and blood." In believing this truth, we ſee a complete victory obtained by Jeſus Chriſt, in his death, over the prince of this world, over all the power of ſin, and of the luſt of the world, within us, and over all the power of temptation. So that however great and terrible this power of the prince of the world may be to us, and however impoſſible-like the keeping of the commandments may ſeem to us thereby; yet, in believing this victory that Chriſt hath already won, we are partakers with him in it, according to the meaſure of faith; and ſo we overcome the power of the world, that ſtands againſt the keeping of the commandments of God, and find his "commandments not "grievous." There are many vain pretences unto ſtriving againſt ſin; but "this is the victory over the world, even our "faith:" and who is he that overcometh, but he that believeth? The true fight againſt ſin is the fight of faith. The power of the prince of this world is too ſtrong a party for us to contend with, and all our labour againſt it is but the waſhing of the Ethiopian; yea, we are not at all ſtriving againſt it, but labouring to wreath the yoke faſter about our own necks, by all our natural efforts after deliverance. But Jeſus Chriſt, by redeeming us from the curſe in his death, hath effectually broken the power of the prince of this world, and caſt him out. "For the ſtrength of ſin is the curſe of the "law;" and he hath effectually done away that in his death. Now, when we find ourſelves preſſed hard, and ready to be overwhelmed with the power of the world, we overcome in the belief of this truth. For here we ſee all this power already broken and completely vanquiſhed, and we are partakers of the victory in believing. And further, we find in this truth all the power of God reconciled, and engaged, by the

croſs

croſs of Chriſt, for them that believe. And thus faith overcomes the power of the world. This is the good fight of faith. Thus we overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

Our Lord bids them that would bear his yoke and burden, firſt take reſt to their conſciences in him, and then take on his yoke: For it will be inſupportable to them that take not reſt by faith in that redemption which is already wrought by his blood: but unto all them that are of this truth, and find reſt in believing, it will be eaſy and light, and they will find his commandments not grievous: Matth. xi. 28. 29. 30. "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and "I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn "of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye ſhall "find reſt unto your ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my "burden is light."

5. It is by this truth that we are ſanctified, and ſo powerfully inclined and enabled to hear Chriſt's voice: John xvii. 17. 19. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is "truth. And for their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, that they al-"ſo might be ſanctified through the truth." Compare Heb. x. 10. 14. "By the which will we are ſanctified, through the "offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all. —— For "by one offering, he hath for ever perfected them that are "ſanctified." It is the God of peace, God reconciled by the death of Chriſt, that ſanctifies us: 1 Theſſ. v. 23. "And the "very God of peace ſanctify you wholly." And therefore, when the Apoſtle tells us, "that every man that is in Chriſt "is a new creature," he declares, that all the things of this new creation "are of God, who hath reconciled us to him-"ſelf by Jeſus Chriſt; making him to be ſin for us, who "knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of "God in him," 2 Cor. v. 17. 18.—21. And when he prays that Chriſt's people may be made perfect in every good work, he prays thus, Heb. xiii. 20. 21. "The God of peace that "brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great "ſhepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting "covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his "will, working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight, "through Jeſus Chriſt."

We receive the ſpirit of ſanctification from the ſlain Lamb, and by the hearing of faith; and that faith whereby we are ſanctified, is "faith in the blood of Jeſus;" that faith whereby we get an inheritance among them that are ſanctified, is the very ſame faith whereby we receive remiſſion of

ſins; the power that ſanctifies us is no other power but th power of the croſs of Chriſt; and the glory to which we a conformed by the Spirit in beholding it, is the glory tha ſhines in Chriſt crucified; and we are raiſed up to walk i newneſs of life, no otherwiſe but together with Chriſt, and b the power of his reſurrection, "who was delivered for ou "offences, and raiſed for our juſtification," and by tha blood of the everlaſting covenant, by virtue of which he cam again from the dead: and therefore they ſeek ſanctificatio where it is not to be found, who ſeek it not in this truth; and they ſeek it in vain, who ſeek it not by that belief of this truth, whereby we receive the remiſſion of ſins, and are juſtified. But every one that is of this truth is ſanctified by it, and ſo inclined to hear Chriſt's voice.

6. In this truth we have ſet before us the moſt powerful and engaging pattern of obedience. There have been many flouriſhing diſcourſes about the example of Chriſt, and about following him as a pattern; and, no doubt, he is every where ſet before us in the goſpel to be imitated, and copied after by us: but we cannot look upon his example unto any advantage, if we do not view it, as it lies in this truth; and if it be ſet up any way unto the diſparagement of this truth, the glory of it is deſtroyed. There are theſe two things that they would do well to advert to in the example of Chriſt, who are in good earneſt to copy after it. 1. They muſt look upon the man Chriſt Jeſus, who was obedient unto the death, as a truly divine perſon, and behold his glory, as the glory of God manifeſt in the fleſh: ſo they will find him an unerring pattern, and have confidence to follow him abſolutely without any fear of idolatry. 2. They muſt look upon his obedience unto the death, as that very righteouſneſs, whereby they are to be juſtified in the ſight of God, and intitled to the inheritance of children; and ſo they will find themſelves under the influence of his redeeming love, and the power of his croſs, to engage them to copy after him, and will find the greateſt encouragement and liberty in following him. It will be no bondage nor ſlaviſh taſk for them to follow him in his obedience to the death, who have this view of it. The Apoſtle Peter ſets it before us in this view, 1 Pet. ii. 21. 24. "For even hereunto were ye called: becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuf "fered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow "his ſteps:—Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own "body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto "to righteouſneſs: by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed."

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Thus Chriſt's example is ſet before us in the truth, to which he bears witneſs; and thus it is powerful to conform us unto itſelf: "For we all with open face, beholding (in the "goſpel) the glory of the Lord Chriſt, are changed into the "ſame image, by the Spirit of the Lord;" even that ſame Spirit that dwells in him, and furniſhed him in his whole obedience unto the death. He makes us partakers of the grace of the man Chriſt Jeſus; and being thus partakers in his grace, we copy after him in his obedience. For the like grace produces the like obedience. So we, beholding the glory of the Word made fleſh, full of grace, do all receive of his fullneſs, grace, anſwerable to the grace that is in him; which makes our obedience anſwerable to his, according to the meaſure of grace received from him. And we beholding the glory of his obedience and ſufferings, "are changed from "glory to glory, by the Spirit of glory" that reſted upon him, in his obedience, and through which he offered up himſelf; and this according to the meaſure of our beholding his glory.

Chriſtians cannot but acknowledge, there is a beauty and glory in his obedience. But do we ſee no glory in his ſufferings, which accompanied his obedience from firſt to laſt? And is there no beauty, no glory, in being conformed to him in his ſufferings, and in his being deſpiſed and rejected of men, "a man of ſorrow and acquainted with grief," in his poverty and want, his ſhame and diſgrace, and his painful and ſhameful death, and in his patient enduring the croſs, and deſpiſing the ſhame? Is not that ſuitable language for Chriſtians, "God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of "our Lord Jeſus, by whom the world is crucified to me, "and I to the world. It became him, for whom are all "things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many ſons "unto glory, to make the captain of their ſalvation perfect "through ſufferings?" And it well becomes them who are led to glory by him, to go forth unto him bearing his reproach, and to follow their crucified captain, bearing the croſs; which is the good old way of following him, that had a certain iſſue in eternal glory. And whatever the men of this world may think, it is the greateſt glory we are capable of in this world, the greateſt privilege we can be admitted to, to be conformed unto Chriſt in his ſufferings. And "every "one that is of the truth," will, according to his meaſure, breathe after it; and be ſomething of Paul's mind, when he

ſays, " Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things loſs, — that I
" may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the
" fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto
" his death; if, by any means, I might attain unto the re-
" ſurrection of the dead."

" Now unto him that died and roſe again, that he might
" be Lord both of the dead and of the living; to that living
" one that became dead, and is alive for evermore, and hath
" the keys of hell and death, be everlaſting glory and do-
" minion." *Amen.*

QUERIES

QUERIES put to Mr Glas, by the ſynod of Angus and Mearns, with his ANSWERS, in April 1728.

Query 1. IS it your opinion, That the Chriſtian magiſtrate has no more power concerning church-matters than a private believer? or not?

Anſwer. If the church be of this world, or if it be national, and eſtabliſhed by the laws of the kingdoms of this world with civil ſanctions, and if it have juriſdiction over the magiſtrate's ſubjects in their civil rights, then the magiſtrate's power muſt be in and about the matters of ſuch a church; but in the kingdom of heaven, or in the church of Chriſt, which is not of this world, the magiſtrate's power, whether he be Chriſtian or not, has no place.

Quer. 2. Is it your opinion, That earthly power, or power of the magiſtrate, ought not at all to be employed for advancing the kingdom of Chriſt? or not?

Anſ. The kingdom of Chriſt, which is not of this world, cannot be advanced by earthly power, or the power of the magiſtrate, any otherwiſe than as all things are working together for the advancement of it.

Quer. 3. Is it your opinion, That it is unlawful to enact laws, with penalties, in favour of religion? or to defend the true religion by arms? or not?

Anſ. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath not annexed civil ſanctions to his laws, and the true religion cannot be defended by arms, as may the natural and civil rights and liberties of mankind: it muſt be defended another way, Eph. vi. 11. 12. 13. 2 Cor. x. 4.

Quer. 4. Is it your opinion, That no argument can be drawn for the Chriſtian magiſtrate's acting for the reformation of religion, and ſuppreſſing of falſe worſhip, from the examples of magiſtrates under the Old Teſtament? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, till I ſee otherwiſe.

Quer. 5. Is it your opinion, That the kingly office of the kings of Judah and Iſrael was an eccleſiaſtical office? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the kingly office of David, and the kings that ſat upon his throne, was eccleſiaſtical.

Quer. 6. Is it your opinion, That the magiſtrate ought not to give civil encouragement to good Chriſtians, living in his dominions, more than any other good ſubjects? or not?

Anſ.

Anſ. Civil encouragement given by the magiſtrate reſpects his good ſubjects as ſuch.

Quer. 7. Is it your opinion, That the countenance of civil authority to the church is a hindrance to religion or reformation? or not?

Anſ. It is not my opinion; but I have thought, that the encouragement given by Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors to the clergy, however they deſigned it, ſerved to raiſe Antichriſt to his throne.

Quer. 8. Is it your opinion, That the magiſtrate ought to give liberty to heretics, and all falſe teachers, to perform their worſhip, and ſpread their opinions, and hinder none of them, if they carry otherwiſe as good ſubjects? or not?

Anſ. The magiſtrate can puniſh none that carry as good ſubjects.

Quer. 9. Is it your opinion, That the church of Iſrael was but a typical church; and God's covenant with them was but typical and temporary, promiſing nothing but earthly bleſſings, and a carnal inheritance? or not?

Anſ. That church which conſiſted of all Iſrael according to the fleſh, was a type of that church which conſiſts of all the Iſrael according the ſpirit; and that typical church enjoyed only earthly bleſſings, and an earthly inheritance, by virtue of the covenant at Sinai, which could not give them ſpiritual bleſſings, and the heavenly inheritance, any other way than as it was ſubſervient unto the better covenant eſtabliſhed on better promiſes, by which all true believers among them obtained eternal bleſſedneſs.

Quer. 10. Is it your opinion, That the old Sinai covenant made with the church, was but a type, figure, or ſhadow of the new covenant that God was to make with his New-Teſtament church? or not?

Anſ. The nation taken into covenant with God at Sinai, was a type of the heavenly nation related unto him in the new covenant; the redemption of that people out of Egypt, was a type of the eternal redemption of all the people of God by Jeſus Chriſt; Moſes, the mediator of that old covenant, was a type of Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator of the new covenant; the inheritance belonging to that covenant or teſtament, was a type of the inheritance in the New Teſtament; the blood wherewith that old covenant or teſtament was dedicated, was a type of the blood of Chriſt ſealing the new covenant; and that old covenant, which is made old, Heb. viii. and is caſt out, with the people covenanted, Gal. iv. even that firſt teſtament

ſtament dedicated with the blood of beaſts, was a type or pattern of the new covenant or teſtament in the blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Heb. ix. 15.—23.

Quer. 11. Is it your opinion, That the commands or precedents under the old teſtament, for national covenanting, were not moral, but typical, earthly, and Jewiſh, and ought not to be imitated by any Chriſtian nation? or not?

Anſ. I know no nation truly Chriſtian, but the holy nation, the kingdom of Chriſt; which is not of this world, and is gathered out of all nations: this is the only nation bringing forth the fruits of the kingdom of God, and with this nation there is an everlaſting covenant.

Quer. 12. Is it your opinion, That it was unwarrantable for our anceſtors to carry on reformation by national covenanting? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the covenants commonly called the *national covenant*, and the *ſolemn league and covenant*, were without warrant in God's word; and that all the true reformation that has been in theſe lands, was carried on by the word and ſpirit of the Lord Jeſus, by the New Teſtament.

Quer. 13. Is it your opinion, That thoſe who ſuffered in the late times, for adhering to ſuch national covenant engagements, were in ſo far unenlightened? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion; while, at the ſame time, I highly honour and value them, and the light they had, and their ſufferings for Chriſt.

Quer. 14. Is it your opinion, That theſe covenant-engagements have a tendency to lead men off from that foundation that God hath laid in Zion? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That the founding of church-communion, upon that extenſive uniformity, which is the great ſcope of the covenants, national and ſolemn league, had a tendency to lead off men from Chriſt, the foundation that God has laid in Zion, and the corner-ſtone, in whom all the building of God is fitly framed together; and I judge it to be the duty of all his people, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to forbear one another in love, in their differences, about ſeveral parts of the foreſaid uniformity.

Quer. 15. Is it your opinion, That there is no warrant for a national church under the New Teſtament? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion: for I can ſee no churches inſtituted by Chriſt, in the New Teſtament, beſide the univerſal, but congregational

congregational churches; neither do I ſee, that a nation can be a church, unleſs it could be made a congregation, as was the nation of Iſrael; and my opinion about the church ſeems to me to agree with the account our reformers have given of it, in the Scottiſh confeſſion, ſworn to in the national covenant, to which I here refer.

Quer. 16. Is it your opinion, That the members of the viſible church are only thoſe who have the credible marks of regeneration? or not?

Anſ. The members of the viſible church are only thoſe whom our Lord points out to us, and commands us to love, with a peculiar love, in his new commandment, John xiii. 34. 35.

Quer. 17. Is it your opinion, That the body of believers, or church-members, have a right to determine the admiſſion or non-admiſſion of perſons to the Lord's table, together with the miniſters and elders? or not?

Anſ. None can be admitted to communion in the Lord's ſupper, with a congregation of Chriſt, without the conſent of that congregation; and there muſt be a profeſſion of mutual brotherly love in them that partake together in that ordinance.

Quer. 18. Is it your opinion, That the admiſſion of unbelievers to the Lord's table doth pollute the ordinance unto fellow-believing communicants, and hinder ſaints from enjoying communion with the Lord, and with one another, in that ordinance? or not?

Anſ. The admiſſion of viſible unbelievers to that ordinance mars the viſible communion of ſaints in it; and ſo far as their communion with the Lord, in the ordinance, is connected with that viſible communion, ſo far it mars that alſo.

Quer. 19. Is it your opinion, That a ſingle congregation of believers, with their paſtor, are not under the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction and authority of ſuperior church-judicatures, nor cenſurable by them, either as to doctrine, worſhip, or practice? or not?

Anſ. A congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt, with its preſbytery, is, in its diſcipline, ſubject to no juriſdiction under heaven.

Quer. 20. Is it your opinion, That a ſingle congregation of believers hath power, not only to chuſe, but to ordain their own paſtors? or not?

Anſ. If by ordination be meant the laying on of hands, it is not my opinion.

Quer.

Quer. 21. Is it your opinion, That it is unwarrantable to take parents engaged to educate their children, when baptized, according to the confeſſion of faith of this church? or not?

Anſ. It is my opinion.

Quer. 22. Is it your opinion, That Chriſt, by his aſcenſion, hath tranſlated the place of the church's worſhip from earth to heaven, and the ſeat of the church's power? or not? And, if it be, In what ſenſe do you underſtand it?

Anſ. It is my opinion, That heaven itſelf, where Chriſt our High Prieſt is entered, and where he ſits ruling on the throne of his father David, is what we now have, inſtead of the worldly ſanctuary, and the holy places made with hands, and what we have inſtead of mount Zion, where David's throne was ſet.

Quer. 23. Is it your opinion, That a miniſter's preaching the neceſſity of repentance, and a mourning frame of heart, in order to fit people for approaching to the Lord's table, is to make them ſeek for a righteouſneſs of their own? or not?

Anſ. It is not my opinion; if he do not preach up repentance, and a mourning frame, inſtead of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which is to deſtroy repentance and a mourning frame.

Quer. 24. Is it your opinion, That becauſe God or his Spirit doth all for us in the buſineſs of ſalvation, that therefore we are to do nothing? or not?

Anſ. God forbid that it ſhould be my opinion.

Quer. 25. Is it your opinion, That the practice of our anceſtors, at the reformation and revolution, in defending the true religion by arms, againſt the unjuſt oppreſſion of Papiſts and tyrants, was unwarrantable? or not?

Anſ. The Proteſtant cauſe, (ſo far as the ſword is concerned in it), and the revolution, is a civil, not properly an eccleſiaſtical cauſe; and a moſt righteous cauſe it is, as it ſtands in oppoſition to antichriſtian tyranny, and oppreſſion of the conſciences and juſt liberties of men; and thus it is the common cauſe of mankind againſt ſlavery of ſoul and body.

Quer. 26. Do you think yourſelf obliged, in conſcience, to teach and publiſh theſe your opinions, differing from the received doctrine of this church, unto the people? or not?

Anſ. I think myſelf obliged in conſcience to declare every truth of Chriſt, and keep nothing back, but to ſpeak all the words of this life, and to teach his people to obſerve all things whatſoever he commands, ſo far as I can underſtand;

and that, notwithſtanding of others their differing from me and my being expoſed to hazard in the declaring of them.

A query ſeparately put to Mr Glas by the ſynod.

Conſidering that in Mr Glas's anſwers to the propoſal, he did adhere to his former ſubſcription of the Confeſſion of Faith and *Formula*, and would again renew it? he ſays, his ſcruples againſt ſigning are mainly the two therein mentioned they think it convenient that he be interrogate, If he hath freedom in his mind to ſign all the other articles of the Confeſſion of Faith, as the confeſſion of his faith?

Mr Glas's anſwer.

I have not freedom to refuſe any thing in our Confeſſion, but what relates to the paſſage already mentioned, in the chapter concerning Chriſtian liberty, and liberty of conſcience, and in the chapter concerning ſynods.

An

An Explication of that PROPOSITION contained in Mr Glas's anſwers to the ſynod's queries, "A congregation or church of Jeſus "Chriſt, with its preſbytery, is, in its diſ- "cipline, ſubject to no juriſdiction under "heaven."

TOGETHER WITH

A LETTER concerning communion in the Lord's Supper. In anſwer to ſome conſiderations on that ſubject ſent to the author by a friend.

Iſ. iv. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.*

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IF any ſhall find themſelves obliged to appear againſt what is here advanced, it is intreated, that they bring with them no other authority but that of the word of God alone; and that they do not ſatisfy themſelves with referring to what others have done before them, but fairly bring forth what light they themſelves have to offer, from the word of God, againſt what is here ſaid, and againſt that only; and, further, that they forbear metaphyſical wrangling, and charging the author with any erroneous opinion not expreſsly owned by him in theſe papers; and this, if they would not loſe their labour, for clearing the truth, and convincing thoſe whom they judge erroneous.

The explication of the before-mentioned propoſition.

SOme are at a loſs how to underſtand this propoſition, and how far a practice ſuitable to it may take place without prejudice to the preſent eſtabliſhment; and therefore ſome-

thing needs to be ſaid, 1. For clearing the ſenſe of the propoſition. 2. For ſhewing how far the intendment of it is without prejudice to the preſent eſtabliſhment.

As to the *firſt* of theſe, we muſt again conſider, 1. What may be meant by a congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt? 2. What by its preſbytery? 3. What by its diſcipline? and 4. How it is ſaid to be in its diſcipline ſubject to no juriſdiction under heaven?

If theſe things be cleared, there will be no remaining difficulty about the ſenſe of the propoſition. But before we proceed to them, we muſt take notice, that as the query to which this propoſition is an anſwer, took its riſe from Mr Glas's declining to affirm, that the conſtitution of the church of which the *Formula* ſpeaks, is founded in the word of God; ſo the propoſition reſpects no other thing but that word of God, and what appears to the author of the propoſition from thence: and therefore unto that word we muſt have reſpect, in explaining the propoſition. And whence ſhould we have our notions of the church, if it be not from ſcripture-revelation? Or if this matter be no way deſcribed or determined there, who then ſhould deſcribe or determine it to us? But if there be any that think Chriſt hath not appointed any church order or government, nor laid down any plan of it, in his word, and therefore men may make what model of it they think moſt convenient; or if there be that think the plan laid down by Chriſt and his apoſtles, concerned only the firſt age or ages of Chriſtianity, and that it is in the power of more advanced ages to alter it for their own conveniency, as ſeems meet to their wiſdom; ſuch will not ſee the need of troubling their heads with this propoſition, or any explication of it: and therefore, without troubling ourſelves further with them, we ſhall proceed to explain the ſeveral branches of the propoſition by the light of ſcripture-revelation, which will no doubt be very agreeable to the authors of the query who have ſubſcribed to this, as a great and important truth "That the government of the church is founded in the word "of God," and reckon it a crime of a very hainous nature to alter their opinions on this head.

1. The firſt thing in the propoſition that comes to be cleared is, "A congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt."

And, 1. Here it is obvious, that the words *congregation* and *church* are made of the ſame import. Yet it is a matter very inſignificant what they be in any human propoſition but we are told, "Every word of God is pure: He is a ſhiel

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" unto them that put their truſt in him. Add thou not unto " his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." And therefore the import of God's word on this ſubject muſt be diligently ſought after; and if the propoſition has added nothing to his words here, it will be clear, and no lie in this part of it.

The word *church*, [ἐκκλησία,] when it is uſed in ſcripture to ſignify another thing than a Chriſtian *congregation*, it yet ſignifies a *congregation*. Thus that unlawful aſſembly at Epheſus brought together into the theatre againſt Paul by the craftſmen, is called ἐκκλησία, *a church*, Acts xix. 32. 41.; and ℣ 39. it ſignifies *an aſſembly*. Thus we ſee the uſe of the word in other caſes.

But this word is ordinarily applied in ſcripture unto a more ſacred uſe; and then indeed it ſometimes ſignifies the body aſſembling, and ſometimes the aſſembly of that body; but ſtill a congregation. The whole body of the diſciples at Corinth is called the *church*, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. And we find the aſſembly of that body alſo called the *church*, 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20.——" When ye come together in the church."—— " When ye come together into one place." See, to this purpoſe, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. 35. " Let your women keep ſilence " in the churches.——And if they will learn any thing, let " them aſk their huſbands at home; for it is a ſhame for wo- " men to ſpeak in the church." The women were members of the church at Corinth, whether at home or in the aſſembly: ſo that the different aſſemblies of that ſame body of men and women that came together into one place, from time to time, to eat the Lord's ſupper, and to teach and hear, are called *churches*: " Let your women keep ſilence in the aſ- " ſemblies.——If they will learn any thing, let them aſk " their huſbands at home; for it is a ſhame for a woman to " ſpeak in the aſſembly."

The whole nation of Iſrael is called a *church*, Acts vii. 38. But that was a congregation, and had one place of worſhip, the tabernacle of the congregation. The catholic church of Chriſt, his holy nation and kingdom, the antitype of that church of Iſrael, is alſo a congregation, having one place of worſhip, where they all aſſemble by faith, and hold communion: and when all the members of it are fully gathered in, they will be one glorious aſſembly. We find it called the " general aſ- " ſembly and church of the firſt-born, whoſe names are writ- " ten in heaven," Heb. xii. 22. 23.

It may be a queſtion, if all the diſciples of Chriſt through-

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out the world be called the church, any otherwiſe than as they appear, and, in the judgment of charity, are reckoned to be of this "general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born?"

But the propoſition plainly ſpeaks of a particular "church "of Chriſt," wherein this "general aſſembly" is ſomeway viſible; ſuch as the church in Jeruſalem, the church at Antioch, the church at Corinth, the church at Epheſus, &c. If theſe churches appear to have been no more but congregations, or companies aſſembling together in one place, it will then be manifeſt, that, throughout the word of God, the word *church*, in this matter, is of the ſame uſe as in the propoſition; and if this appear to have been the caſe in Jeruſalem, there will be no great ground of needful diſpute about the reſt.

Before we proceed to inquire into this, it may be obſerved, that we do not find the officers or repreſentatives of any church or churches, or any congregation or aſſembly of them, called *the church*; but we find the people diſtinguiſhed from them, and called *the church:* Acts xv. 22. "It pleaſed the "apoſtles and elders, with the whole church." Acts xiv. 23. "And when they had ordained them elders in every "church." Acts xx. 17. 28.—— "He ſent to Epheſus, "and called the elders of the church.—— Take heed unto "yourſelves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy "Ghoſt hath made you overſeers, to feed the church of "God."—— By theſe and ſuch like places, it appears, that the propoſition ſpeaks in ſcripture-ſtyle, when it ſays *a church of Jeſus Chriſt, with its preſbytery.* It is true, that both flock and overſeers are frequently called *the church*; but it cannot be made manifeſt, that the overſeers or repreſentatives of the flock or flocks are ever called *a church*, as it is manifeſt, that the whole flock, the multitude, the πλῆθος, or full body of the diſciples, when ſpoken of diſtinctly from the overſeers, is called *the church.* The *church-repreſentative*, as it is called, is a thing altogether foreign to the ſcripture-ſtyle; and the uſe that has been made of it in after ages, ſhews the wiſdom of God in forbearing to afford any encouragement to it, in his word, and cutting off from us all pretences unto any authority from his word, for our own inventions.

Now, it cannot well be denied by them that believe there is a plan of the conſtitution and order of the church laid down in the ſcriptures, that the church in Jeruſalem, ſetting aſide what may be ſhewed to be extraordinary, is a pattern

tern for the conſtitution and order of all the churches of Chriſt: and therefore they who contend for the divine right of that church deſcribed in the *Formula*, appeal conſtantly to the church at Jeruſalem, judging their great ſtrength lies there. Here then we muſt come for the deciſion of this queſtion, Whether the churches of Chriſt be only congregations? And the whole of this cauſe turns upon this, Whether the church in Jeruſalem was many congregations united in one common preſbytery? or, Whether it was but one congregation aſſembling from time to time in one place? And though there might be many meetings of diſciples in Jeruſalem, yet if the whole body, called *the church*, aſſembled together in one place from time to time?

They that contend for many congregations united in their common overſeers, inſiſt mainly upon the multitude of diſciples there; from which they infer, it was impoſſible they could all be one congregation.

It is true, there were very great numbers converted in Jeruſalem by the goſpel, and many diſciples of Chriſt in Jeruſalem; as theſe paſſages ſhew, Acts i. 15. "The number "of the names together were about a hundred and twenty." Acts ii. 41. —— "And the ſame day were added unto them "about three thouſand ſouls;" and, ℣ 47. "The Lord "added to the church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved." Acts iii. 11. "And as the lame man which was healed, held Peter "and John, all the people ran together unto them in the "porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." Acts iv. 4.— "Many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thouſand." Acts v. 14. "And believers were the more added to the "Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Acts vi. 1. 7. "And in thoſe days, when the number of the diſciples was "multiplied,— and the word of God increaſed, and the "number of the diſciples multiplied in Jeruſalem greatly, "and a great company of the prieſts were obedient to the "faith." All this is before the diſperſion by the perſecution that aroſe about Stephen, Acts viii. 1. and xi. 19. After that diſperſion, we find James and the elders ſaying to Paul, Acts xxi. 20. "Thou ſeeſt, brother, how many thouſands "of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous "of the law."

Now, beſides that it cannot be made appear, that all the multitudes were members of the church at Jeruſalem *, the

* *See* Clarkſon's primitive Epiſcopacy.

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inference that is made from theſe accounts of the numbers is plainly beſide the ſcope of the Holy Ghoſt in ſpeaking of the numbers, which is not to ſhew, that the diſciples and church-members in Jeruſalem could not be one congregation, but many, under one common preſbytery. There is not the leaſt intimation of ſuch a ſcope: but the plain ſcope of his ſpeaking of the numbers is, to ſhew the great power of the grace of the Lord Jeſus by the goſpel, and the accompliſhment of the Old-Teſtament prophecies, in gathering ſinners unto him. If we had but the leaſt hint of their being divided into ſeveral congregations, then the inference would have the more weight; but that ſeems to be a thing much avoided, in the account we have of the church at Jeruſalem. We find a conſiderable difficulty aroſe from the multiplication of the number of the diſciples in that church, Acts vi.; and it may be thought it would have been a very good expedient, to have divided them into ſeveral congregations, for remedying that evil that aroſe from their numbers. But what do the apoſtles of Chriſt under the direction of the Holy Ghoſt? They call the multitude of the diſciples unto them, and ſeven deacons are choſen for ſerving tables to the whole multitude in common. And they that inſiſt upon this inference from the number of the diſciples in that church, allow no place for deacons but in a congregation. They are alſo obliged to own, that there were not different fixed congregations in Jeruſalem, but that they aſſembled in different places promiſcuouſly, and were all under the common overſight of the apoſtles acting as elders, and afterward of the elders bearing part of the burthen with the apoſtles. But this is to give up the cauſe of different fixed congregations under a common preſbytery, and to ſtrike out ſeſſions; and makes the church at Jeruſalem ſomething very near akin to one congregation. They that reaſon from the conſtitution and order of the church in Jeruſalem, to ſhow what is of divine right in this matter, are bound ſtill to follow what they take to have been the order in that church; and not to change it, by erecting ſeſſions under the juriſdiction of a preſbytery in different fixed congregations. Yet this inference from the number of the diſciples in that church, howſoever wide, might be tolerable, if it were not croſs to plain texts, ſhewing that the church in Jeruſalem was a congregation. And it is not a decent way of treating the ſcripture, to draw long conſequences from texts that have another ſcope, contrary to plain texts againſt thoſe conſequences; or to explain clear o-

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pen ſcriptures, by conſequences from other texts that do not appear to have theſe conſequences in their ſcope; and thus to explain away the plain obvious ſenſe of theſe clear ſcriptures. This would not be a fair way of treating a human writing. And there muſt be ſomething elſe than the influence of ſcripture-light, and a regard to ſome other thing than the conſiſting of the ſcripture with itſelf, at the bottom of this way of doing.

Now, let us ſee what the Holy Ghoſt ſays expreſsly of the multitude of diſciples in the church at Jeruſalem. He tells us, (and this is a ſhort ſum of the ſtate of the church in Jeruſalem), Acts ii. 41. 42. "The ſame day were added unto "them above three thouſand ſouls. And they continued ſted- "faſtly in the apoſtles doctrine and fellowſhip, and in break- "ing of bread, and in prayers." ℣ 44. "And all that be- "lieved were together *." ℣ 46. "And they continued daily "with one accord † in the temple." ℣ 47. "And the "Lord added to the church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved." Acts iv. 31. 32. "And when they had prayed, the place was "ſhaken where they were aſſembled together. And the "multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of "one ſoul." Acts v. 12. 13. "And they were all with one "accord in Solomon's porch ‡. And of the reſt durſt no "man join himſelf to them: but the people magnified them." Acts vi. 1. 2. 3. 5. 6. "And in thoſe days, when the number "of the diſciples was multiplied, there aroſe a murmuring of "the Grecians againſt the Hebrews. Then the twelve call- "ed

* ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, which is ſometimes tranſlated *in one place*. And I know not if that phraſe occurs any where in the New Teſtament in another ſignification. See thoſe places where it is found, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 20. Acts ii. 1. and iii. 1. Luke xvii. 35.

† ὁμοθυμαδὸν. Neither ſeems this word to be uſed in the New Teſtament, but in the caſe of more or fewer concurring perſonally in the ſame action. See thoſe texts, Acts i. 14. and ii. 1. and iv. 24. and v. 12. and vii. 57. and viii. 6. and xii. 20. and xv. 25. and xviii. 12. Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7.

‡ Here the Holy Ghoſt tells us expreſsly of the place where they all aſſembled with one accord, Solomon's porch. Againſt this it is ſaid, That it was impoſſible for Solomon's porch to hold them all. But they that ſo flatly contradict the teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt, muſt own, if they will believe him in any caſe, that the place now under that name was greater than the porch of old built by Solomon: for by comparing chap. iii. 11. with chap. iv. 4.

" ed the multitude * of the diſciples unto them, and ſaid, It
" is not meet that we ſhould leave the word of God, and
" ſerve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among
" you ſeven men of honeſt report, — whom we may appoint
" over this buſineſs. And the ſaying pleaſed the whole mul-
" titude: and they choſe Stephen, *&c.* whom they ſet be-
" fore the apoſtles". Acts xxi. 18. 22. " The day follow-
" ing, Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were
" preſent. And they ſaid unto him, The multitude † muſt
" needs come together: for they will hear that thou art
" come." Acts xv. 4. 5. 6. 12. 13. 22. " And when they
" were come to Jeruſalem, they were received of the church
" and of the apoſtles and elders. — But there roſe up certain
" of the ſect of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying, ——
" And the apoſtles and elders came together for to conſider
" of this matter. —— Then all the multitude ‡ kept ſilence
" and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul. —— And after
" they had held their peace, James anſwered, ſaying, Men
" and brethren, hearken unto me. —— Then it pleaſed the
" apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen
" men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and
" Barnabas."

What now ſhould be the ſcope of the Spirit of God, in telling us of all that believed; the multitude of them that believed; the multitude of the diſciples; the whole church; their being together, or in one place; their continuing with one accord, or in perſonal communion in the temple, and in Solomon's porch; and their being a ſeparate body there, the reſt not daring to join themſelves to them; their joining all together in the choice of deacons to ſerve them in the matter of their common charity; and joining with the apoſtles and their elders in ſending letters to Antioch; and all this without ever giving us the leaſt hint of their being divided into ſo many congregations? Does he thus conſtantly ſpeak

we ſee that two thouſand at leaſt were converted in that place by that ſermon, and theſe were not all they that heard the word there. But if they who would make the numbers ſo great that they could not be one aſſembly, will have the number converted by that ſermon, in that porch, to be five thouſand, they muſt acknowledge that this ſame porch held more than five thouſand

* τὸ πλῆθος. † πλῆθος.

‡ Πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος. See Lauder on the divine inſtitution of biſhops having churches conſiſting of, *&c. p.* 17.

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them as one undivided body, aſſembling frequently and ordinarily in one place for the worſhip of God, and all matters of common concern to them, and leave us to make out a conſtitution and order of that church, which ſhould be followed, as a plan laid down by the Holy Ghoſt for after ages, and this from the number of the diſciples its being ſo great, that the church of Jeruſalem could not be as he ſeems expreſsly to ſay? It were more agreeable to a due regard to the ſcriptures of truth, to ſay ſomething for reconciling the ſcripture-account of the nature of the church in Jeruſalem, with the numbers of diſciples there, than to uſe an indecent freedom with the plain words of the Holy Ghoſt, to reconcile them with our own diſtant conſequences, drawn from words ſpoken by him, beſide his ſcope in theſe words.

And to this good purpoſe it is obſervable, that there were ſome things ſomeway extraordinary in the church at Jeruſalem, by reaſon of which a greater multitude could be one congregation there than in other places, where we read of churches of Chriſt in the New Teſtament. As, 1. The communion of goods among them. Acts ii. 44. 45. 46. "And all that believed —— had all things common, and "ſold their poſſeſſions and goods, and parted them to all "men, as every man had need. —— And breaking bread "from houſe to houſe, did eat their meat with gladneſs, and "ſingleneſs of heart." And Acts iv. 32. 34. 35. "And the "multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of "one ſoul: neither ſaid any of them that ought of the "things which he poſſeſſed was his own, but they had all "things common. Neither was there any among them that "lacked: for as many as were poſſeſſors of lands or houſes, "ſold them, and brought the prices of the things that were "ſold, and laid them down at the apoſtles feet: and diſtri-"bution was made unto every man according as he had "need." By this communion of goods, they were a body of people living upon a common ſtock, and had acceſs to be much together, and to be well acquainted; and were not hindered, by their ordinary employments, from cloſe communion in their private and public meetings, and from continuing daily with one accord in the temple. For thus they ſeem to have given up themſelves wholly unto the buſineſs of their communion in the worſhip of God, and in the mutual duties of brotherly love, and in ſpreading the goſpel. This was extraordinary: for the caſe was not the ſame in other churches; where the diſciples laboured, for moſt part, in

their ordinary employments through the week, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. and aſſembled ordinarily on the Lord's day.

2. They had the conveniency of the temple for a meeting-place, where it was free to all ſorts and ſects of the Jews to aſſemble, without trouble or moleſtation, even from the Romans, if they did not diſturb their government, or make any uproar. The members of the church were all Jews, that had not yet forſaken the obſervation of the ceremonies of Moſes's law. And as it is plain, they preached openly in and about the temple; ſo the Chriſtian inſtitutions of baptiſm, and the eating of bread and drinking of wine in the Lord's ſupper, were like to ſome uſages among the Jews, and could not occaſion greater offence to the unbelieving Jews, than the preaching of the goſpel, and the great converſions thereby. We have ſeen before, that they were a ſeparate body, in ſome of their meetings in the temple; and it is alſo obſervable, that the people not yet joined to the church, and that durſt not join themſelves unto them, magnified them; and that they had favour with all the people for ſome time, Acts v. 11.—14. and Acts ii. 47.

When the perſecution became ſo hot, that they could not aſſemble with one accord in the temple, they were ſo ſcattered abroad, that it cannot be ſhewed there remained any more in Jeruſalem, during the perſecution, than might aſſemble in ſome private place: neither, after the heat of that perſecution was over, can it be ſhown, that there was any greater multitude in the church at Jeruſalem, than ſuch as might, and whom it behoved to come together in one place, Acts xxi. 18.—22. For though James and the elders ſpeak to Paul of many thouſands of Jews which believed; yet they do not tell that theſe thouſands were in the church at Jeruſalem: for by that time there were many other churches of believing Jews throughout all Judea, Acts ix. 31. Gal. i. 22. occaſioned by Paul's perſecuting, waſting, and ſcattering the church at Jeruſalem, and thoſe diſtinct from the church in Jeruſalem, and many believing Jews through the world, that came to the feaſt.

It is obſervable, that when the multitude became ſo great, and the perſecution ſuch, that they could not conveniently aſſemble with one accord in one place, it was ſo ordered they were ſcattered abroad, and other churches made out o them. And ſuch a great multitude of diſciples in Jeruſalen being kept together, till then aſſembling with one accord i the temple, without any inſinuation of its being divided int

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diſtinct congregations united in a preſbytery, makes way for an inference of this nature, That the Holy Ghoſt, laying down a plan in the church at Jeruſalem for all other churches of Chriſt, kept that great multitude in the ſtate of a congregation, till it could no more be ſo; and then ordered things ſo, that it was ſcattered abroad, and other new churches erected after the faſhion of it.

3. That great multitude was all of one heart and ſoul. The unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace and brotherly love, was there in its very prime; and the gift of tongues was there in exceeding abundance, with all gifts neceſſary unto mutual edification. For the members of that church were furniſhed and trained up there for ſpreading the goſpel through the world: and the multitude was under the overſight and guidance of all the apoſtles of Chriſt. So that no objection, ariſing from the unwieldineſs of ſuch a great body of men, or from the difference of languages among them, can ſhake the truth of their being all one congregation, aſſembling from time to time with one accord in one place.

There might be manifold meetings of diſciples in Jeruſalem; but it ſeems pretty plain, that the body of diſciples, called *the church*, could, and did frequently aſſemble with one accord in one place; and ſo was but one congregation.

Thus we find the words *church* and *congregation* of the ſame import in Jeruſalem. And if this was the caſe there, we may expect to find it ſo in other places.

The firſt church of the Gentiles was at Antioch. The diſciples there ſeem to have been brought into church-order by Barnabas,—Act xi. from ℣ 22.: and we are told, ℣ 26. that he and Paul "aſſembled themſelves a whole year with "the church." And, Acts xiv. 26. 27. when they returned to Antioch from "the work which they had fulfilled," it is ſaid, "they gathered the church together, and rehearſed all "that God had done with them, and how he had opened the "door of faith unto the Gentiles." Acts xv. 30. "When "they were diſmiſſed, they came to Antioch: and when "they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered "the epiſtle." The church at Corinth was a numerous church, but ſtill one congregation, and a church of the ſame kind with that at Cenchrea. See chap. xi. of the firſt epiſtle directed unto the church of God at Corinth, ℣ 18. 20. 22.—"When ye come together in the church, I hear there be di-"viſions among you.—When ye come together therefore "into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's ſupper," [or, ye

ye cannot eat the Lord's ſupper]. "What, have ye not houſes "to eat and to drink in? or deſpiſe ye the church of God?" Chap. xiv. 23. "If therefore the whole church be come to-"gether into one place, and all ſpeak with tongues, and "there come in thoſe that are unlearned or unbelievers, will "they not ſay that ye are mad?"

The church at Epheſus is much ſpoke of in this matter, and the numbers of the converts there inſiſted on, the ſame way as in the caſe of Jeruſalem, to ſhew that it behoved the church there to conſiſt of many congregations united in a preſbytery. That church, when firſt erected, conſiſted of no great number, Acts xix. 7. 9. And it is true, that, from that time, the ſucceſs of the goſpel at Epheſus was very great. Paul's continuance there for the ſpace of two years, gave occaſion to all the Proconſular Aſia to hear the word of the Lord Jeſus, ℣ 10. So that the growth and prevalency of the word of God there, ℣ 28. furniſhed matter for the ſeven famous churches of Aſia, ℣ 26. whereof this of Epheſus was one; and without queſtion, it was a church of the ſame kind with the other ſix; and it appears from the latter end of the xix. chapter of the Acts, that all the town of Epheſus was very far from being converted to the faith.

When Paul, on his journey, calls the elders of that church to Miletus, he ſpeaks to them as the overſeers of one congregation, Acts xx. 28. "Take heed to yourſelves, and to "all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made "you overſeers, to feed the church of God, which he hath "purchaſed with his own blood." If the church at Epheſus had been many congregations united in a preſbytery, it would have been a way of ſpeaking very agreeable thereunto to have ſaid, "Take heed to yourſelves, and the *flocks* over which "the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers:" and this would have been reckoned a very ſtrong argument for a plurality of congregations under a preſbytery. But this way of ſpeaking is ſtill avoided in the writings of the New Teſtament. Here we find the diſciples of Chriſt at Epheſus diſtinguiſhed from the preſbytery, (which is that whereby ſome would make many congregations one church), and in this diſtinction from the preſbytery called all one flock and church: "Take heed "to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made "you overſeers." So that here was one flock, one congregation; not many flocks, not many churches or congregations, under the overſight of the preſbytery at Epheſus. And this was the church at Epheſus, the ſaints and faithful at Epheſus,

pheſus, all builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 22. In this ſtate remained the church at Epheſus for a long time after, as they that have been looking into antiquity have told us*, all communicating and praying together in one place.

It is true, the other churches had not the conveniency of the temple for a meeting-place, as had that firſt church at Jeruſalem: but they had "large upper rooms;" as we find the church at Troas aſſembled to partake of the Lord's ſupper "in an upper room," where there were many lights, and ſome ſat in windows, Acts xx. 6. 7. 8. 9. And it is probable that Aquila and Priſcilla, great inſtruments in promoting the kingdom of Chriſt, kept ſuch a houſe, where-ever they dwelt, as was a fit meeting-place for the church in that place. So we find Paul adviſing the church at Rome to ſalute Aquila and Priſcilla, probably then at Corinth, with the church in their houſe; and writing to the Corinthians from ſome other place, he tells them, that "Aquila and Priſcilla ſalute them, with "the church in their houſe," Rom. xvi. 1.—5. 1 Cor. vi. 19. We alſo read of one Nymphas, whom Paul deſires the Coloſſians to ſalute, with the church in his houſe; which was probably ſome one or other of the Aſian churches, perhaps Laodicea itſelf, Col. vi. 15. And Philemon had a church in his houſe, Philem. ℣ 2. He ſeems to have been ſome great man.

Upon this head of the ſcripture-language about the church, it will not be eaſy otherwiſe to ſatisfy any man's conſcience, how it is that the Holy Ghoſt, when ſpeaking of all the diſciples of Chriſt, in a nation or province, that could not aſſemble ordinarily in one place, ſo conſtantly abſtains from calling them the church of ſuch a nation, or province, or one church by themſelves; but ſays, the brethren or ſaints in ſuch places, Acts xv. 23. 2 Cor. i. 1. and the churches of Galatia, Gal. i. 2. the churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1. the churches of Aſia, 1 Cor. xvi. 19.; but when ſpeaking of the diſciples of Chriſt in a city or town, which might aſſemble together ordinarily in one place, calls them *a church*, ſaying, the church of Antioch, the church at Corinth, the church of Epheſus, and the like. Shall we believe, that ſuch a ſtate of the church has the ſtamp of divine authority upon it, that the Holy Ghoſt has ſo much forborn to favour with the name of a church, and in favour of which he has ſtrictly avoided

* See King's inquiry into the conſtitution, life, &c. chap. 2.

dropping

dropping ſo much as one word? He foreknew what deſolations would be brought upon the churches after his plan, by the inventions of men in this matter; and therefore he has cut off from them all pretences unto any authority from his words for their own inventions.

The whole nation of the Jews was one church, as was before ſaid, under the Old Teſtament; and it is very remarkable, that, after the diſperſion, all the diſciples of Chriſt in Judea are not called a church by themſelves, or one church, but churches, Acts ix. 31. Gal. i. 22. 1 Theſſ. ii. 14. It is true, this careful obſervation of the words of God in this matter is much deſpiſed by ſome; and they can ſee no weight in ſuch obſervations upon the words of God, becauſe they are plainly againſt them. But to ſhew what pains ſome very great and good men have been at, to find countenance from ſcripture-words, unto ſuch a ſtate of the church as they have been prejudiced in favour of, ſee how they go to work, to make all thoſe churches in Judea one church, in the ſcripture-ſtyle. They tell us, "Thoſe whom Paul perſecuted were "one church," Gal. i. 13. Acts viii. 3. And ſo were the diſciples whom he is ſaid to perſecute in thoſe texts. He perſecuted, and waſted, and made havock of the church of Jeruſalem, Acts viii. 1. 3. "But," ſay they, "he perſecuted more than "the church in Jeruſalem." And how is that made out? "He obtained letters from the chief prieſts to go to Damaſcus, "that if he found any of that way, he might bring them "bound to Jeruſalem; and had authority from them to bind "all that called upon Chriſt's name there," Acts ix. 2. 13. 14. After he had ſcattered the church at Jeruſalem abroad, and they had fled far from thence, he purſues them, and perſecutes them; not now called the church, nor the ſame church he made havock of, and waſted, Acts viii. but the diſciples, and all that called on Chriſt's name. But now, when he goes to Damaſcus, he is beyond Judea: And how does this make all the diſciples in Judea a church by themſelves, or one church? They tell us further, "We read of churches throughout Ju- "dea," Gal. i. 22. Acts ix. 31. Yes, after the diſperſion, and during the perſecution, there were churches erected throughout Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria. But how are the churches of Judea one church by themſelves; or how are the churches in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, one church? "The "church," ſay they, "that Paul perſecuted, was one church." Yes, Saul perſecuted the church at Jeruſalem: the Holy Ghoſt ſays ſo; and that he had letters, and a commiſſion, to perſecute

perſecute all that called on that name at Damaſcus; and he breathed out threatenings and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of the Lord where-ever they were. But does the Holy Ghoſt ſay, that all the diſciples of Chriſt, within the compaſs of ground, as far as Saul may be ſuppoſed to perſecute, were one church by themſelves? They ſay, "The churches of "Judea, to whom Paul was unknown by face, ſaid, He per-"ſecuted us in times paſt; he perſecuted us the churches:" for they will have the churches ſpeaking of themſelves in a church-capacity, and all joining as churches; for it would ſpoil all to ſay, that the diſciples of Chriſt that fled out of the church at Jeruſalem, for fear of Saul, and were now members of the churches in Judea that were raiſed in time of that perſecution, and to which Saul was not known by face, ſaid, "He that perſecuted us in times paſt, preacheth the "faith that once he deſtroyed." And next they ſay, "Paul "perſecuted one church, and ſo all theſe churches were one "church." It is ſaid Paul perſecuted the church at Jeruſalem: but is it ſaid, that all other churches and diſciples that might be perſecuted by him, were that one church that he waſted in Jeruſalem?

The Holy Ghoſt, in giving account of Saul's perſecution, and of the church in Jeruſalem, and of the ſcattered diſciples, and of the churches raiſed on occaſion of the waſting of the church in Jeruſalem, keeps very cloſe by his uſual way of ſpeaking on this head. But they, by confounding times, by conſequences very wide, and abſtract notions, would make the word of God to ſay the very thing, that, to the utmoſt, it every where avoids.

Our reformers, taking their notions of the church only from the word of God, acknowledge no other church of Chriſt beſides the univerſal, but congregations: as is to be ſeen in the Scots confeſſion of faith, art. 18. where we have theſe words: —— "Whereſoever, then, theſe former notes * "are ſeen, and of any time continue, (be the number never "ſo few, about two or three), there, without all doubt, is the "true church of Chriſt, who, according to his promiſe, is "in the midſt of them: not that univerſal, of which we "have before ſpoken, but particular, ſuch as were in Co-

* Thoſe notes are, 1. The true preaching of the word of God. —— 2. The right adminiſtration of the ſacraments of Chriſt Jeſus. —— 3. Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline uprightly miniſtered, as God's word preſcribes.

" rinthus, Galatia, Epheſus, and other places, wherein the " miniſtry was planted by Paul, and were of himſelf named " the churches of God: And ſuch churches we, the inha- " bitants of the realm of Scotland, profeſſors of Chriſt Jeſus, " have in our towns and places reformed." And this is a part of that confeſſion of faith which was ſworn to in the national covenant. And what is ſaid of the nature of the apoſtolic churches on this head by Mr Baxter and Mr Lauder againſt dioceſan Epiſcopacy, and by King in his Inquiry into the conſtitution, &c. of the primitive church, may alſo be conſidered by them that have ſhown a great reſpect to thoſe writers in oppoſition to prelacy.

2. But there is a ſecond thing to be noticed in this part of the propoſition, before we paſs it. The church or congregation of which the propoſition ſpeaks, is diſtinguiſhed from other aſſemblies and congregations, (which ſometimes get the name *church*, as was noticed), and that by being called *a congregation of Jeſus Chriſt*.

This is a congregation of Chriſt's diſciples, that have been ſo far taught by his word and Spirit, as to be able to confeſs the faith which is in him. No man can call " Jeſus the Lord, " without his Spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 3. The Apoſtle there ſpeaks of the common operations and gifts of the Spirit of Chriſt. Compare ℣ 13. with chap. xiii. We cannot diſcern betwixt the common and ſpecial operations of the Spirit in others, or betwixt a temporary believer, who may fall away, and them that believe to the ſaving of the ſoul. " But as he that hath " not the Spirit of Chriſt, is (undoubtedly) none of his," Rom. viii. 9.; ſo he that no way appears, by his profeſſion of the faith, to have the Spirit, no way appears to be one of Chriſt's; and ſo is no fit member of a congregation of Jeſus Chriſt.

Now, the faith that is confeſſed by the diſciples of Chriſt, reſpects the three glorious, equal, and diſtinct perſons of the one only Godhead, in whoſe name we are baptized; and it reſpects them as they appear to us in the goſpel-revelation of redemption and ſalvation in Jeſus Chriſt: Matth. xxviii. 19. " Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in " the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy " Ghoſt."

The faith of Chriſtians is the faith of Chriſt, the Son of God, Matth. xvi. 16. 17. 18. Acts viii. 36. 37.; and more eſpecially under the New Teſtament, it is " faith in his " blood," Rom. iii. 25. and in him, as " delivered for our " offences,

" offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification," Rom. iv. 23. 24. 25. Rom. x. 6. 8. 9. 10. " But the righteouſneſs " which is of faith, ſaith —— The word is nigh thee, even " in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith " which we preach, That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth " the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God " hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved: For " with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with " the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation."

From this it may appear, that there is more in this confeſſion of the faith than a bare aſſenting unto, or ſubſcribing any form of words expreſſing the doctrine of faith: for though it may be very uſeful for a church, or many churches, to publiſh their faith to the world, and make it known in every age, ſo as to point out the word of God, and their ſenſe of it, in oppoſition to the hereſies and errors prevailing in the day wherein they live; yet it will require another ſort of a confeſſion, than a bare aſſent unto any ſuch form of words, (eſpecially if it be under any worldly conſtraint), to make a man accounted of as a diſciple of Chriſt, and ſo a fit member of a church of his. He muſt confeſs with the mouth, ſo as it may appear ſome way that it comes from his heart. And however weak and indiſtinct his confeſſion of the faith be, yet it muſt appear unto others, who ſhould account him a diſciple, to be hearty: " For with the heart man believeth " unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made." Thus we find, when the eunuch aſks Philip, " What doth " hinder me to be baptized?" he anſwers, " If thou believeſt " with all thine heart, thou mayſt;" and when he ſatisfied him of this, by his confeſſion, in conſequence of Philip's preaching, he baptized him, Acts viii. 35.—38. To the ſame purpoſe we may conſider, Acts v. 12. 13. 14. which more nearly touches the caſe of membership in a particular church or congregation of Jeſus Chriſt: " They were all " with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the reſt durſt " no man join himſelf unto them: but the people magnified " them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, " multitudes both of men and women." Might not the people that magnified them, have been admitted among them, and charitably thought of? No; they durſt not join themſelves to them: for they could not yet find in their hearts to confeſs the faith, whatever ſtrivings of the ſpirit they had been under; and there was ſuch an awe of God upon them, by means of what befel Ananias and Saphira, that they durſt not

feign a confeſſion, and join themſelves. This was the great advantage of that church, a glorious fruit of that awakening providence in the church. But was not the ſucceſs of the goſpel marred by this ſtrict ſeparation of the diſciples from others? No; the ſucceſs of the goſpel was the greater, and the church increaſed the more in number: "For multitudes "both of men and women were added to the Lord." And what were they? How are they diſtinguiſhed from the people that magnified them, and durſt not join themſelves unto them? They were believers, accounted ſo to be in the judgment of charity, upon the confeſſion they made of the faith of Chriſt. And there was great care among the diſciples in Jeruſalem to keep off ſuch as they believed not to be diſciples from their communion; as we ſee in that inſtance, Acts ix. 26. 27. 28. "When Saul aſſayed to join himſelf to the diſciples, they "were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a diſ "ciple;" and ſo received him not, till the apoſtles "received "ſatisfaction from Barnabas about him." And when this church was firſt erected, after the coming of the Holy Ghoſt it was made up of them that had been pricked in their hearts and gladly received the word, Acts ii. 37.—40. 41. They made a ſeemingly hearty confeſſion of the faith, were added unto the hundred and twenty, became with them one church, and ſo ſeparated themſelves from that untoward generation, according to Peter's exhortation.

There is an unity of the faith of Chriſt's diſciples, Eph. iv. 3. 5. 13. And as the ſalvation of Chriſt is the common privilege of all that believe in all nations, Jude 3. Rev. v. 9. "And the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt is unto all, and upon "all them that believe, without difference," Rom. iii. 21. 22.; ſo there is but one faith; and the confeſſion of this faith as it is one, in all them that are Chriſt's throughout the world, qualifies a man for being a member of a church of Jeſus Chriſt. By this means a fit member of any one church may be a member of any true church of Chriſt throughout the world. And this was the catholiciſm that took place in the beginning of Chriſtianity. But a church of which a man cannot be a member by a hearty confeſſion of this one faith, without a confeſſion of the faith of doctrines about which the diſciples of Chriſt, by reaſon of different meaſures of light, have differed, and with reſpect to which they are commanded to forbear one another in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit, is off from the chatholic footing upon which church-communion went from the beginning

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Let a man confeſs what doctrines he will, yet if he appear not hearty in the confeſſion of the one faith, he cannot be a member of a congregation of Chriſt's diſciples; and they ought not to hold communion with him as a diſciple: but however any man differ from other diſciples of Chriſt, if he ſhew a hearty agreement with them in the confeſſion of the faith, as it is one, and eſſay to join himſelf to any congregation of Chriſt's diſciples, they are bound to receive him. If he decline to join to a company of diſciples, ſeparated from the unbelieving world, and joined together in the confeſſion of the one faith, and that becauſe they do not all think in all things as he does, then he is, in this point, guilty of a breach of the catholic unity, and not they. Every diſciple of Chriſt muſt confeſs the whole truths of Chriſt, the very leaſt of them, at all hazards, ſo far as he knows them; but it is the confeſſion of the one faith that makes a man a proper member of a church of Chriſt, or a proper object of brotherly love.

The diſciples of Chriſt that confeſs the faith of the Son of God, delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification, do alſo call him Lord: for to this end "Chriſt "both died and roſe again, that he might be Lord both of "the dead and of the living:" ſo that "whether we live, we "live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the "Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's," Rom. xiv. 7. 8. 9. "The love of Chriſt conſtrains his diſci-"ples, becauſe they thus judge, that if one died for all, "then were all dead: that they which live ſhould not hence-"forth live to themſelves, but to him that died for them, and "roſe again," 2 Cor. v. 14. 15.

As it is a vain thing to call Chriſt Lord, and not ſtudy to do the things that he ſays; ſo, whoſoever appears not to have a ſenſe of his authority upon his conſcience, but lives in open diſobedience to his laws, and profeſſes not repentance from dead works, nor a deſire to obſerve whatſoever he commands, cannot be, in the judgment of charity, accounted a diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt.

The diſciples of Chriſt, therefore, are obſervers of his inſtitutions, ſo far as they know them: they call on the name of the Lord Jeſus; they are ſtudying to follow him in thoſe commandments of God that are chiefly inſiſted on in his word; ſuch as, the command to deny ourſelves, and to take up our croſs and follow him; the command to love our enemies, and bleſs them, and pray for them, and the like. But the trying commandment of the New Teſtament, and the

the diſtinguiſhing fruit of faith, whereby the ſincerity of our faith, and of all our obedience, is tried and manifeſted, is the commandment of brotherly love; a peculiar love to the diſciples of Chriſt on his account, and for his ſake, John xiii. 34. 35. John xv. 1 Cor. xiii. Heb. vi. 9. 10. 11. and 1 John. There muſt be a profeſſion of this in all them that are to be accounted diſciples of Chriſt: "For by this ſhall all men know "that we are his diſciples, if we have love one to another. "And he that ſaith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, "is in darkneſs even until now; he that loveth his brother, "abideth in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling "in him."

It ſeems to be one great end of the inſtitution of a goſpel-church, that the diſciples may be in the conſtant and regular practice of the duties of this love toward one another. This love reſpects all the ſaints, all the diſciples of Chriſt throughout the world: but in vain do we pretend to love all the ſaints, while we ſhew forth no more love to ſuch of them as we have ſeen, than to the reſt of the world. Our love to God is to be tried by our love to our brother, whom we have ſeen, 1 John iv. 20.; and our love to the Lord Jeſus will be meaſured by our love to them at the laſt day, Matth. xxv. from ℣ 34. to the end. Now, there may be many of the diſciples of Chriſt whom we have but ſeldom acceſs to ſee, and ſo cannot perform the duties of this love towards them but occaſionally, and as providence ſometimes offers opportunity; but it is neceſſary, unto the eſtabliſhment in the faith, the comfort and full aſſurance of hope, in the diſciples of Chriſt, and unto their mutual edification in love, that they be conſtantly and regularly in the exerciſe of the duties of this love toward one another, where there is any company of them, that, by dwellings and circumſtances, can conveniently perform theſe duties toward one another. Heb. vi. 10. 11. "God is not unrighteous, to forget your "work and labour of love, which ye have ſhewed toward "his name, in that ye have miniſtered unto the ſaints, and do "miniſter. And we deſire that every one of you do ſhew the "ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end." Col. ii. 1. 2. "I would that ye knew what great conflict I "have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many "as have not ſeen my face in the fleſh: that their hearts "might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto "all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God," &c. Heb. iii. 12.

13.

13. "Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an "evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. "But exhort one another daily while it is called, To-day; "leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of "ſin." Heb. x. 23. 24. "Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of "our faith without wavering;—and let us conſider one ano-"ther to provoke unto love and good works: not forſaking "the aſſembling of ourſelves together, as the manner of "ſome is; but exhorting one another," *&c.* 1 Theſſ. v. 11. "Wherefore comfort yourſelves together, and edify one "another, even as alſo ye do." 1 Cor. xii. 25. 26. 27.

From theſe and ſuch like places, it appears, that this conſtant and regular practice of the duties of this love, muſt be in a congregation, or a company of diſciples joined together, and aſſembling themſelves together for that purpoſe; and this cannot take place but in a congregation of diſciples. So this is one great end of the Lord's inſtitution of a goſpel-church.

But unto this it is neceſſary that all the members of ſuch churches be fit objects of this brotherly love, and the duties of it. Therefore we find the members of the apoſtolic churches called the brethren, and brethren for whom Chriſt died, according to the Lord's commandment: "That we "ſhould love one another, even as he loved us." The Apoſtle's exhortation to the elders of the church of Epheſus, is remarkable to this purpoſe: "Take heed," ſays he, "to "all the flock—to feed the church of God which he hath "purchaſed with his own blood." If there was any one of that flock or church of whom it could not be ſaid, in the judgment of charity, that he was purchaſed with the blood of God, the ſtrength of the Apoſtle's argument for their taking heed to all the flock, and feeding them, would be gone with reſpect to that perſon. The church of the Theſſalonians, 2 Theſſ. i. 3. is commended for this, that "the charity "of every one of them all toward each other abounded:" which could not be, if every one of them all had not been meet objects of this charity or brotherly love; for this love has only brethren in Chriſt for the objects of it, 1 Theſſ. iv. 9. 10. To what purpoſe would all the members of the churches be ſo frequently exhorted to love one another with this love, if this were not to be ſuppoſed, that they were all proper objects of this love, and the duties of it? We find the church at Epheſus, Rev. ii. 4. 5. condemned by the Lord for the decay of this love, and the fruits of it among them, and threatened with the diſſolution of their church, the taking

king away of their candleſtick out of its place, on that account: for thus they came ſhort of the end of their being a church. Some of the other Aſian churches are condemned for holding in their communion ſuch as were not meet objects of this love. The church of Corinth is called to refuſe communion with every one called a brother, and living ſcandalouſly; and to purge out the old leaven, that they may be a new lump, 1 Cor. v. And, for their enlargement, and that they might not be ſtraitened in their own bowels, they are exhorted, 2 Cor. vi. not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. Perhaps there may be ſome view there unto ſome among them, who began to deny the reſurrection, after they had confeſſed the faith of Chriſt. We are called in this matter of Chriſtian communion, "To turn away from ſuch "as have a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it," 2 Tim. iii. 5.; and "to withdraw ourſelves from every bro-"ther that walketh diſorderly, in diſobedience to the com-"mands of Chriſt," 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. And that great rule of diſcipline laid down by our Lord, Matth. xviii. is ſubſervient to the new commandment of love among his diſciples in a church; as appears from the context: for when a brother treſpaſſes, ſo as our brotherly love to him may cool, we are to take the pains there preſcribed to reclaim him; but if he obſtinately perſiſt againſt the endeavours of the church, then we are commanded to refuſe communion, and not to walk in the peculiar duties of this love with him.

As the confeſſion of the one faith gives a man a right to the title of a diſciple; ſo this brotherly love muſt proceed upon this unity of the faith: for otherwiſe it will be no more Chriſtian brotherly love, but ſectarian and party love, like that which takes place among the factions and parties of this world. In the profeſſion of this catholic faith and love in Chriſt, with the fruits of it, the firſt Chriſtians were diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world, and united among themſelves, and were conformed to their Lord Jeſus Chriſt: ſo they were deſigned *ſaints*, the ſaints and faithful in Chriſt Jeſus; and all the firſt churches "were churches of ſuch "ſaints," 1 Cor. xiv. 33. They were alſo repreſented in the viſion to John by golden candleſticks, on account of the matter of which they ought to be made up.

But againſt the ſubſerviency of Chriſt's inſtitution of a church, conſiſting only of his diſciples, unto this new commandment of brotherly love, it is objected, not only that it ſerves to make diviſion, and raiſe animoſities in the world, but

but that it always, in all the ways wherein it has been attempted in later ages, has occaſioned diviſion among the diſciples of Chriſt, and their ſeparation from one another.

As to the firſt thing in this objection, it lies as well againſt Chriſtianity itſelf, and againſt the new commandment of brotherly love, as againſt a church, conſiſting only of proper objects of brotherly love. For it is certain, that commandment of Chriſt, wherein we are injoined to take a peculiar complacence in his diſciples on his account, and to love them for the peculiar relation they have to him, does not oblige us to beſtow this love upon all men: and, becauſe in the duties of this love to them, we expreſs our love to Jeſus Chriſt, whom the world hates, and ſo appear to the men of this world to be on his ſide of that controverſy betwixt the ſeed of the woman and of the ſerpent, it is no marvel if the men of this world hate us; hence there will be an open diviſion betwixt the diſciples of Chriſt, in their obedience to this command, and the men of this world, as our Lord hath warned us; and for this the world will be condemned at the laſt day. See John xv. from ℣ 17. to the end, and xvi. 1. 2. 3. 2 Theſſ. i. 3.—6. 1 John iii. 11. 12. 13.

But it is much to be lamented, that ſince a ſort of Chriſtians have been made in great numbers, by the influence of the powers of the earth, and not by the influence of the goſpel upon their minds and hearts, and ſince the outer court of God's houſe has been trodden under foot by the Gentiles under Antichriſt, the diſciples of Chriſt, the objects of brotherly love, have been divided and ſeparated from one another, upon attempts to revive Chriſt's inſtitution in this matter. Yet the blame cannot be laid upon his inſtitution, but upon the diſciples themſelves. And for this conſider, 1. In ſeveral of the ſteps of reformation from the corruptions of Antichriſt, the diſciples of Chriſt, through different meaſures of light, have been wofully divided from one another. Take, for inſtance, that diviſion betwixt Luther, and thoſe that ſtood with him, on the one hand, and Zuinglius and Calvin, and thoſe that were with them, on the other, about the Lord's ſupper. 2. By means of impoſition, and the driving of uniformity, the diſciples of Chriſt have been ſo far engaged in ſects and parties, and have been trained up in ſuch a regard every one to the way of his own ſect, that any attempt to bring them into communion in love upon thoſe things wherein they are all one, and all divided from the men of this world, however ſtrictly joined with them in their ſects, muſt

meet with great oppoſition from them. And much of this is owing to ſome of their teachers, by whom they have received the goſpel, who preſs upon them the peculiarities of their own ſect, which have nothing to ſupport them, for moſt part, but human authority, and that with ſuch zeal, as if religion were to ſtand and fall with them. 3. As has been noticed, obedience to the Lord's new commandment, and the following of his inſtitution in this matter, according to it, cannot miſs of expoſing the diſciples of Chriſt to the hatred of the men of this world. And it is alſo to be noticed, that we have all a ſtrong bias toward the friendſhip and fellowſhip of this world, and toward conformity to a preſent world, and that it is not eaſy to reconcile us to the croſs; ſo that it is no wonder to ſee many of the diſciples contenting themſelves in a way of religion, much magnified and extolled, that does not expoſe them much to the world's hatred, and wherein they may indulge themſelves in compliances with, and conformity to the world; and riſing up againſt a way that expoſes them to the croſs, and has no worldly advantages attending it. We want not inſtances of this in the New Teſtament; and what has been, may be again.

By theſe and ſuch like conſiderations, it may appear, that the blame of diviſions ariſing upon Chriſt's diſciples their attempting to follow his inſtitution in this matter, is not to be caſt on his inſtitution, which ſerves to join them all together in love in that wherein they are all one, and divided from the world; but it muſt lie upon the diſciples themſelves: and while thoſe diſciples of his that do oppoſe it are ſo far guilty of ſchiſm, the infirmities and corruptions attending thoſe, that have from time to time attempted to follow the commandment of Chriſt in this matter, ſhould not be juſtified, nor ſhould their faults be improven againſt the pure and holy commandment of Jeſus Chriſt.

However many diſciples of his may oppoſe it, yet it is moſt agreeable to the new nature in them, which leads to ſeparation from the men of this world, and conſtant communion in love with the diſciples of the Lord. And though we be bound to forbear the practice of indifferent things, in the caſe of offending weak brethren; yet no man will alledge, that we ought to forbear commanded duty, for fear of offending weak brethren; or that we ought to ſet about no ſtep of reformation from any corrupt ſtate of things, under which the diſciples are, till they be all ſatisfied in it. The diſciples that openly confeſſed Chriſt, and followed him, were not to be blamed for tranſgreſſing the law of brotherly love; becauſe they

hey differed therein from thoſe that would not confeſs him or fear, and becauſe they were afraid of being put out of the ynagogue, and becauſe "they loved the praiſe of men more "than the praiſe of God." The hundred and twenty diſciples, Acts i. "waited not for the reſt of Chriſt's diſciples at "that time; and upon them came the Spirit." See Heb. x. 25.

3. There remains yet a third thing that belongs to the ſcripture-notion of a diſciple of Chriſt, and member of a church of his; and that is, the confeſſion of the Chriſtian hope, "the one hope." This hope is one of thoſe notable three of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Cor. xiii. 8.—13. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, "they ſhall fail; whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; "whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away.—— "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, theſe three; but "the greateſt of theſe is charity." Concerning this hope, and the profeſſion of it, ſee theſe texts, Heb. iii. 6. "—But "Chriſt as a Son over his own houſe: whoſe houſe are we, if "we hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope "firm unto the end." Col. i. 23. "If ye continue in the "faith,—and be not moved away from the hope of the go-"ſpel." Heb. x. 23. 24. 25. "Let us hold faſt the pro-"feſſion of our hope" (as in the firſt language) "with-"out wavering, (for he is faithful that promiſed.) And let "us conſider one another to provoke unto love, and to "good works: not forſaking the aſſembling of ourſelves to-"gether," &c.

He does not appear to be a diſciple of Chriſt, who does not appear to prefer that eternal life contained in the promiſes of the goſpel, and hid with Chriſt in God, to appear when he appears, unto a life in this world; and who does not confeſs himſelf denied to the one, in the hope of the other; or does not confeſs Moſes's choice, and own himſelf a ſtranger on earth, looking for the heavenly country, and counting all things loſs to be found in Chriſt, having his righteouſneſs, "and to attain to the" glorious "reſurrection "of the dead." There are doubtleſs various degrees of this hope, and of the profeſſion of it. There is hope, and the aſſurance of hope; and there is the aſſurance, and the full aſſurance of this hope: but ſomething leſs or more of this hope, in the profeſſion of it, belongs unto the notion the ſcripture gives us of a diſciple of Chriſt, and a member of the church. This hope in us, as it is influenced by faith in

Chriſt, our righteouſneſs, and love in him to all the ſaints, ſo it "will be according to the meaſure of that faith and love," Col. i. 3. 4. 5. 1 Theſſ. i. 3. Heb. xi. 1. Heb. vi. 10. 11. 1 John iii. from ℣ 18. to the end. When the profeſſion of faith and love was lively, ſo was the profeſſion of this hope; and there is no greater evidence of the decay of faith and love, than the want of that confidence and rejoicing of the hope, in the very profeſſion of it that appeared in the firſt Chriſtians, the firſt members of the churches of Chriſt.

In the beginning, when men became Chriſtians only by the influence of the goſpel of Chriſt, and when there was no worldly advantage attending Chriſtianity, it appeared in their profeſſion of the faith of Chriſt, that they were in earneſt about the eternal life revealed in the goſpel, and that they preferred it unto a life in this world, and that they believed the truth of the goſpel; and when they became companions of the ſuffering diſciples, there was no reaſon to queſtion their love to them. And when they confeſſed Chriſt with joy, in the face of perſecution, and with the hazard of all that was near and dear unto them in this world, it was a good evidence of their hope in the other world. Even then there were hypocrites among them; but there was no ground to queſtion their ſincerity, while they held faſt this profeſſion. Yet there was in thoſe days care taken about the profeſſion of them that were admitted unto full communion in the churches of Chriſt. Some profeſſed a good liking to Chriſtianity, that were not preſently admitted to full communion in the churches; but were kept under inſtruction, till they were ſome way able to profeſs the Chriſtian faith, love, and hope, and then they were called the *perfect*, Phil. iii. 15. But when the profeſſion of Chriſtianity came to be attended with worldly advantages, there was more need of nice ſcrutiny. Yet it fell out quite otherwiſe, unto the great diſhonour of the Chriſtian profeſſion. Whole nations were brought to a ſort of profeſſion of the name of Chriſt; not by the influence of the goſpel, but of the magiſtrate: and their profeſſion was ſuitable unto the influence by which it was brought about. Ten thouſand ſuch converts were then baptized in one day; and, no doubt, there would be great joy among them that had the diſpenſing of that ordinance in their hands, to ſee ſo many Chriſtians; but there was more than reaſon for that queſtion, which was propoſed when "Saul was ſeen among the prophets," "Who is their Father?" And the ancient profeſſion of the Chriſtian hope, which took place when the Chriſtian

profeſſion

profeſſion expoſed men to the loſs of their all in this world, was loſt, now, when it was no loſs to a man's intereſt in this world, but his great advantage, to call himſelf a Chriſtian. Thus Chriſtianity (if that ſort of it may be ſo called) became national, intwiſted with the civil rights of mankind, attended with a hope in this life, and Chriſt's kingdom of this world. After this, the nations that were Heathen, becoming thus Chriſtian, were corrupted or reformed, according to the influence of the clergy, now dignified, and great men in the earth, and according to the influence of the princes of the earth, whoſe power was ſerviceable to the clergy. It was eaſy for the nations, thus brought from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity, to become Antichriſtian and idolatrous. And though the Lord's hand was remarkably ſeen at the Reformation, in reviving the light of the glorious goſpel, and making ſome "of the kings of the earth," in ſome meaſure, "withdraw "their power from the beaſt:" yet the reformation became national no otherwiſe than Chriſtianity became ſo at firſt; that is, by their ſubmitting to an external form of national reformation under the influence of thoſe in power. But while church-memberſhip goes not upon the footing of the ancient profeſſion of faith, hope, and charity, Chriſtianity will not appear in its primitive beauty and glory.

There have been attempts, ſince the Babyloniſh captivity, to revive this, and it has been much oppoſed: but, as was ſaid of the ſecond temple, when compared with the firſt, ſo it may be ſaid in this caſe, "Is it not as nothing in your eyes?" Yet we may be encouraged to build by this, "That the "Lord will come to this ſecond building." "Let us," therefore, "not forſake the aſſembling of ourſelves together, but "exhort one another; and ſo much the more, as we ſee the "day approaching."

So much has been ſaid of the members of which a church of Jeſus Chriſt is made up. And by this it is diſtinguiſhed from all other congregations, even though they ſhould be called *Chriſtian*, which do not conſiſt of the diſciples of the Lord Jeſus. By their being joined together in the confeſſion of the catholic faith, love, and hope, which is in him, they are diſtinguiſhed from all ſectarian ſocieties. For thus the diſciples are builded together in him, "for an habitation of "God, through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 22. "Chriſt the cor-"ner-ſtone, in whom all the building of God," the catholic church, "is fitly framed together," is alſo the foundation and corner in this little building, compared ℣ 21. So a company

pany of his diſciples, joined together in him, as he ſtands in the confeſſion of their faith, love, and hope, is a church of his. And this church is diſtinguiſhed from the church-catholic by the diſciples their being joined together thus, for holding conſtant communion in the ordinances of worſhip, calling on the name of the Lord Jeſus, and glorifying the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, "with one mind [ὁμοθυμαδὸν] in one "mouth," Rom. xv. 5. 6. 7.; and for the conſtant regular performance of the duties of brotherly love toward one another, and aſſembling themſelves together from time to time, with one accord, in one place.

Such a congregation is a church of Jeſus Chriſt. And it is "a habitation, a temple of God," Eph. ii. 22.; "a "dwelling-place and aſſembly of Mount Zion," Iſ. iv. 5. The church at Corinth is called *God's temple*, 2 Cor. vi. 16. and 1 Cor. iii. 9. 16. 17. "Ye are God's building.——Know "ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of "God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of "God, him ſhall God deſtroy; for the temple of God is ho-"ly, which temple ye are." The Apoſtle tells them he laid Chriſt for a foundation unto this building of God at Corinth, and calls every one that comes after him to carry on this building, to take heed how he builds up ſuch a building that has ſuch a foundation. It has been thought, that it is every particular believer that is there called the building or temple of God by himſelf; but a real believer cannot be deſtroyed, as they that defiled this temple at Corinth might be deſtroyed. It has been alſo thought, that it is of a building of doctrine that the Apoſtle is there ſpeaking. No doubt, members of churches are framed and built in a church, and built up in it by means of doctrine; but it is of a building of perſons that the Apoſtle is ſpeaking: "Ye are God's huſbandry, ye are "God's building, ye are the temple of God." And, ſeeing the Apoſtle, as the maſter-builder of the church at Corinth, laid Chriſt for the foundation of it, and all ſorts of materials are not fit for a building that has ſuch a precious foundation, he calls all that come after him, "to take heed, not only "that they lay no other foundation for a building there, but "alſo, that they build on this foundation," ſuch materials as are ſuitable to it. And the reaſon he gives for their taking heed to this is, that "every ſuch building, every man's work "in it, muſt be tried with fire." Chriſt walks in the midſt of the churches, "with his feet of fine braſs, as if they burned "in a furnace, and all the churches ſhall know that he

"ſearcheth

" ſearcheth the hearts and reins, to render unto every man " according to his works," Rev. i. 15. & ii. 18. 23. There muſt be fiery trials, temptations, and perſecutions, becauſe of the word; and by theſe every man's work will be tried of what ſort it is. The Lord himſelf is notably at work in every ſuch church of his, for the trial and diſcovery of hypocrites: and as the Apoſtle compares the church at Corinth to a huſbandry; ſo our Lord, making the like compariſon, ſhews us this trial of his diſciples, John xv. 1. 2.: and it is the ſame thing that the Apoſtle here calls " a trial by fire." Says our Lord, " I am the vine, and my Father is the huſ- " bandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he " taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he pur- " geth, that it may bring forth more fruit." This trial will be perfect at the ſecond appearance of Jeſus Chriſt. "Now," ſays the Apoſtle, " if any man's work," in this building of God, " ſhall abide the trial, as the gold, ſilver, precious " ſtones, abide the fire;" he ſhall " receive a reward" as a good workman, and ſhall have joy in his work: but if any workman build ſuch materials upon this foundation, laid in the church at Corinth, as will not abide the trial, like the " wood, hay, and ſtubble," that cannot abide the fire; he ſhall ſuffer the loſs of his labour: " And though he himſelf " may be ſaved," becauſe he held the foundation; yet it ſhall be " as by fire," like a man that hardly eſcapes in a burning, loſing all his effects.

What has been ſaid may ſerve for explication of the firſt thing in the propoſition, and for clearing our way to the other things in it. But before we proceed to them, we muſt notice, that unto ſuch a church or congregation of Chriſt do belong the infants of the members, who are pointed out to us, as, with any one of their parents, the objects of brotherly love: " For they are holy," 1 Cor. vii. 14. and they have right to baptiſm with their parents, by their parents profeſſion, Acts ii. 38. 39. Though yet it muſt be owned, that baptiſm is not confined to a memberſhip in any particular church; for we ſee ſuch baptized as were not yet members of any particular church, but only members of the catholic. The inſtance of the eunuch is very clear to this purpoſe, Acts viii. And baptiſm ſeems to have gone before adding unto a particular congregation of Chriſtians. We are baptized into the church-catholic, and not into any particular church, of whatſoever ſort or ſize, as many imagine; and from

from this imagination have proceeded uncharitable and unchriſtian controverſies about baptiſm

But the Lord's ſupper is an ordinance of communion in ſuch a congregation or church of Chriſt as has been deſcribed. It is the moſt high and eminent act of communion in ſuch a church, and therein the diſciples make the higheſt profeſſion of the one faith, which is in the blood of the Son of God; and of the catholic brotherly love toward one another, even as Chriſt hath loved them; and of the one hope, ſhewing forth the Lord's death till he come. This ordinance was always gone about in a congregation of diſciples; for there muſt be a viſible communion of diſciples in it. The church in Jeruſalem "continued ſtedfaſtly in breaking of bread." The diſciples at Troas "came together on the firſt day of "the week, to break bread," Acts xx. 7. The church at Corinth "aſſembled and came together in one place to eat the "Lord's ſupper," Cor. xi. And the Apoſtle there condemns them, for their not "tarrying one for another," for the want of brotherly love in ſetting about that great ordinance of communion, and becauſe the rich indulged themſelves at the love-feaſts, to the neglect of the poor. Very great corruptions indeed, but ſuch as were not abſolutely inconſiſtent with a ſtate of grace: for he tells them, for theſe things "they were judged, and chaſtened of the Lord, that they "might not be condemned with the world; and ſo many "were weak and ſickly among them, and many ſlept." And becauſe theſe abuſes were common in that church, and not confined to a few members, he ſolemnly warns and calls the whole body to reformation in this point, and that ſpeedily, leaving other things to be ſet in order till he ſhould come. It has been very ſurpriſing to ſee ſome men pleading, from this inſtance in the church at Corinth, for a ſettled, conſtant, impure communion of diſciples and no-diſciples in the Lord's ſupper. But paſſing this, we only notice a difference very obvious betwixt baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper. Baptiſm was adminiſtered to a ſingle perſon, upon the ſatisfaction of him that baptized, in the profeſſion of ſuch as were baptized with their infants. But there was ſtill a viſible communion of diſciples, profeſſing mutual brotherly love in Chriſt, and all ſatisfied in one another as diſciples, in the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. x. 16. 17.

II. We proceed now to conſider, what ſhould be underſtood by "the presbytery of a church, or congregation of Jeſus "Chriſt."

And

And here we may obſerve, that all church-office under Jeſus Chriſt, the only head of the church, was at firſt in the hands of the apoſtles, who were employed in the firſt ſetting up, and laying the plan of goſpel-churches. So ſoon as they, by the preaching of the goſpel, made diſciples of Chriſt in Jeruſalem, and joined them together, they exerciſed all church-offices among them. They were deacons in that church; and when that became too burdenſome for them, ſome of the diſciples were ſet apart unto that office, after the manner of which we read, Acts vi. They were elders unto that church: For the apoſtles were alſo elders, 1 Pet. v. 1. and where ever they came, and aſſembled themſelves with any church, they acted therein as elders. When there was neceſſity for it, they alſo ſet apart ſome in the church at Jeruſalem unto the office of elders. So we read of elders in that church, Acts xv. and xxi. Even as Moſes, who at firſt had the whole ruling power in the church of Iſrael, under the Lord, in his hand, when that was found too weighty for him, did, at the divine direction, ſet apart the ſeventy elders, Numb. xi. and appointed other judges, which continued after the removal of that extraordinary officer appointed for the firſt ſetting up of that national church.

Thus we find, in the church at Jeruſalem, the elder, and the deacon, the only ordinary church-officers under the New Teſtament. There is no need of inſiſting to ſhew, that the guidance and government in churches belonged to the "elders of thoſe churches," Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Tim. v. 17. Neither ſhall we ſtay on that diſpute, Whether there were elders that only ruled or preſided in the church, and did not labour in word and doctrine? And it is needleſs to labour in ſhewing, that the New-Teſtament elder or presbyter and biſhop are the ſame thing. This has been abundantly ſhewed by many. But that which muſt be noticed here is, that there was in every church a company of theſe biſhops, or elders, or presbyters, Acts xiv. 23. "When they had ordained them elders in every church." Such a company of elders was in the church at Epheſus, Acts xx. They were paſtors: For they are exhorted to "feed the flock;" and their buſineſs was "to take heed to themſelves, and to all "the flock over which they were overſeers," or biſhops. Of theſe elders that were in every church, there ſeem to have been more than one, perhaps many, in ſome churches, "labouring in the word and doctrine." And whatever may be ſaid as to the being of order in a church, yet unto the well-

well-being of it, more ſuch elders or biſhops than one ſeem neceſſary; elſe they would not have been ſet in the firſt churches And there is no ground in the New Teſtament for that ſaying, which afterwards became common, "One "biſhop and one church:" for at firſt every church had more biſhops. Now, the company of preſbyters, elders, or biſhops, taking heed to themſelves, and to all the flock, is the preſbytery of that flock, that congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt. Such a preſbytery was in the congregation at Jeruſalem, and ſuch a preſbytery was in the congregation at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. The Holy Ghoſt employed that preſbytery to ſet apart and ſend forth Paul and Barnabas to preach the goſpel through the world. And of no other kind was that preſbytery "that laid hands on Timothy," 1 Tim. iv. 14. A company of ſuch elders, placed in a church or congregation of Chriſt's diſciples, is in the beſt ſituation for ſpreading the goſpel. The light is then ſet on a golden candleſtick, Rev. i. 20. and ſo it ſhines round about. For as every member of ſuch a church is ſome way a witneſs for Chriſt, and much more all together, in their joint confeſſion of the faith of Chriſt; ſo they that labour among them in the word and doctrine are as a light ſet on a candleſtick, that it may ſhine to the world. When men are ſent out by ſuch a preſbytery to preach the goſpel in the world, or when the goſpel comes out from ſuch a church, it then goes forth in the moſt orderly regular way, and unto the beſt advantage: for thus it was at firſt ſpread through the world. So ſoon as it is ſucceſsful in any place where it comes, ſo as that there is a number of diſciples, then it is the duty of ſuch a church, with its preſbytery, to aſſiſt the diſciples there, in bringing themſelves into church-order, and furniſhing them with preſbyters or overſeers, Acts viii. 14. Acts xi. 22.—26.

The rule and government of this preſbytery, or elderſhip in a church of Jeſus Chriſt, is not their own, but Chriſt's "They are not lords over God's heritage." 1 Pet. v. 1. 2. 3 "The elders which are among you, I exhort, who alſo am "an elder: — Feed the flock of God which is among you "taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but willing "ly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither a "being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to "the flock." They that "labour in the word and doctrine," muſt not "preach themſelves," the lords of the diſciples, but "Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and themſelves their ſervants for "Jeſus ſake: Even as the Son of man came not to be mi-

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" niſtred unto, but to miniſter, and give his life a ranſom for " many." Their proper power and authority over the flock goes as far as they are furniſhed and enabled by the Holy Ghoſt, for repreſenting the authority of the Lord Chriſt in his word unto them, and as far as they can manage that, with ſpiritual wiſdom upon their conſciences. He that has no meaſure of a gift of this ſort from Jeſus Chriſt, and has no ſkill in the application of his words and commandments unto the conſciences of them that profeſs ſubjection unto him, is no way fit to be an overſeer or preſbyter in one of his churches, which are free from the doctrines and commandments of men.

No company of elders can pretend to more power over the diſciples of Chriſt in a church, than the apoſtles had. And when we look to their adminiſtrations in the church at Jeruſalem, and other churches where they acted as elders, it does not appear, that they did any thing of common concern to the church, without the conſent of the multitude. Thus we have the Holy Ghoſt noting down to us the conſent of the multitude, before ſuch things were fully concluded and done. See an inſtance of this Acts vi. 1.——6. And even in that determination of the great queſtion by the apoſtles and elders Acts xv. we are told, ℣ 22. " It pleaſed the apoſtles and el- " ders, with the whole church" *. Yea, and it ſeems they thought it neceſſary to judge and determine in diſcipline in the preſence of the church, 1 Cor. v. 3. 4. 5.

But it is time now to inquire about the diſcipline of a church of Chriſt. Only let us firſt notice, with reſpect to this ſcripture-word *preſbytery*, that it has been treated the ſame very way, as the word *biſhop*. A biſhop at firſt was an overſeer of a flock or congregation of Chriſtians; but afterwards it came to ſignify a ruler over many preſbyters, and many ſuch flocks, as have taken place in later ages.

Juſt ſo, the ſcripture-preſbytery is the elderſhip of a congregation of Jeſus Chriſt, as has been ſaid; but, in proceſs of time, the word *preſbytery* has come to ſignify a company of elders gathered out of many pariſhes and ſeſſions, and having juriſdiction over thoſe ſeſſions and pariſhes; of which pariſhes and ſeſſions, and of which preſbytery, the ſcripture ſpeaks nothing. But thus have men ſet off their own contrivances with ſcripture-names, to make them well-pleaſing to themſelves, and recommend them to the world. So ſome,

* See Calvin upon the place.

when they find the word *biſhop* in the Bible, never queſtion but it is the dioceſan biſhop. And others, who have learned to know, that the ſcripture biſhop is only the biſhop of a congregation; yet when they find the word *preſbytery*, they are ſure it is their modern preſbytery, having juriſdiction over many ſeſſions and congregations. But what will they do, if they cannot find ſeſſions in congregations under the juriſdiction of a common preſbytery? Why then, if ſeſſions be not to be found in the Bible, nor many congregations under a preſbytery, they muſt either give over troubling their heads with the Bible, and think as honeſt men and fathers have thought before them; or elſe they muſt reſt content with the preſbytery of a congregation, and ſay the ſame thing of the ſcripture-preſbytery that they uſed to ſay of the ſcripture-biſhop. But then they'll paſs under the name of *Independents* and *ſchiſmatics*; and perhaps be made to know, that the preſbytery can act the ſame part to them, to bring them to an orderly way of thinking, as the biſhop did to others before them.

III. Now we come to ſpeak ſomewhat of the diſcipline of a church of Jeſus Chriſt, having a preſbytery or elderſhip, taking heed to themſelves, and to all the flock over which they are overſeers.

On this head of diſcipline there has been much work about the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the binding and looſing ſpoken of by our Lord, Matth. xvi. 19. and Matth. xviii. 18. In the firſt of thoſe texts, what he ſays of the keys, and of binding and looſing, is ſpoken to Peter on occaſion of his making that notable confeſſion of the great fundamental truth of the goſpel concerning him, "The Chriſt, the Son of the "living God; upon which rock," in Peter's confeſſion, he ſays, "he will build his church, and the gates of hell ſhall "not prevail againſt it." This muſt chiefly be underſtood of the inviſible church, the whole body of Chriſt, no part of which can periſh. As to the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the binding and looſing ſpoke of on that occaſion, there is a diſtinction made betwixt the key of knowledge or doctrine, and the key of diſcipline; and ſo likewiſe betwixt binding and looſing doctrinally, and binding and looſing in a way of diſcipline *. And there is ſome foundation for this diſtinction: for there may be a binding and looſing doctrinally, where there is no manner of diſcipline. That text, Matth. xvi.

* See the Palatine catechiſm, qu. 83. 84. 85.

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ſeems chiefly to ſpeak of this doctrinal binding and looſing, as does John, xx. 23. But we cannot exclude the key of diſcipline in that place, and the binding and looſing in a way of diſcipline, which we have more largely and clearly ſpoken of Matth. xviii. 15.—18. which plainly ſpeaks of that which is commonly called *diſcipline*; and the church there is evidently a particular viſible church; "Tell it unto the church: but if "he neglect to hear the church." It cannot be the univerſal church that the offended brother is obliged to tell his brother's fault to, and the offending brother is to hear; but a particular viſible church, wherein they are concerned, and which they have acceſs to ſpeak to, and hear.

Now, it is obſervable, with reſpect to that fundamental rule of diſcipline laid down there by our Lord,

1. That the perſons concerned in the whole of this diſcourſe, from the beginning to the end of it, are the diſciples, the brethren, and they that are to be accounted of by us as believers in him. All theſe, from the greateſt to the leaſt of them, are concerned in this diſcourſe of our Lord: "Whoſo "ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which believe in me," ℣ 6. Other men, whom he diſtinguiſhes from them by the name of *the world*, are no farther touched in the whole diſcourſe than thus: "Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe;" and, "Wo to the world becauſe of offences." The rule of diſcipline here given by our Lord is clearly for the brethren: "If thy "brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee." See 1 Cor. v. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

2. It is alſo very remarkable, that this diſcourſe of our Lord, being occaſioned by the diſciples their propoſing this queſtion, "Who is the greateſt in the kingdom of heaven?" is intended againſt that pride and ſelf ſeeking through which his diſciples would lord over one another, and from whence offences, perſecutions, wars, and fightings among them do flow. He preſſes humility and ſelf-denial, meekneſs, harmleſſneſs, and forbearance toward one another, and that in the moſt awful and moving manner; and vehemently preſſes a direction unto the mortification of this luſt of the fleſh, this wicked deſire of the mind, imported in the diſciples queſtion to him. "He ſet a little child in the midſt of them, and ſaid, Verily "I ſay unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as "little children, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of hea-"ven. Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this lit-"tle child, the ſame is greateſt in the kingdom of heaven. "—Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which be-

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" lieve in me, it were better for him that a millſtone were " hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth " of the ſea. Wo unto the world becauſe of offences: for " it muſt needs be that offences come; but wo to that man " by whom the offence cometh. Wherefore if thy hand or " thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from " thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, " rather than having two hands or two feet, to be caſt in- " to everlaſting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck " it out," *&c.*——" Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of " theſe little ones; for I ſay unto you, that in heaven their " angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in " heaven. For the Son of man is come to ſave that which " was loſt. How think ye? if a man have an hundred ſheep, " and one of them be gone aſtray——Even ſo it is not the " will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of theſe " little ones ſhould periſh." Take heed that ye deſpiſe not " one of the little ones" that believe in Chriſt: The angels of God are all miniſtering ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter unto them, to ſerve them; the Son of man came to ſave them when loſt, to miniſter to them, and give " his life a ranſom " for them, and rejoices in their ſalvation;" the Father is concerned in their ſalvation, deſpiſes not nor rejects them; is not careleſs about them, but delights in their ſalvation: " Take heed that ye deſpiſe not nor reject them, nor diſdain " to ſerve them." O! that this introduction unto the fundamental rule of diſcipline had been attended to always by them that have taken the management of church-diſcipline in their hands! And, conſidering what has fallen out in the world ſince under pretence of diſcipline, does not infinite wiſdom appear in introducing the matter of binding and looſing in diſcipline with ſuch a diſcourſe as this?

3. It muſt further be carefully noticed, that our Lord intends here, that tenderneſs of mutual brotherly love among his diſciples, and that their mutual edification in this love unto their ſalvation, to which that pride and ſelf through which they lord over, perſecute, deſpiſe, provoke, and envy one another, unto their mutual deſtruction, is entirely oppoſite. " Whoſo," ſays he, " ſhall receive one ſuch little child in " my name, receiveth me. But whoſo ſhall offend one of " theſe little ones, that believe in me," *&c.* " How think " ye? if a man have an hundred ſheep, and one of them be " gone aſtray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and " goeth into the mountains, and ſeeketh that which is gone

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" aſtray? And if ſo be that he find it, verily I ſay unto you, " he rejoiceth more of that ſheep, than of the ninety and nine " which went not aſtray." See ℣ 21. 22. and from thence to the end of the chapter. Peter ſaid, " Lord, how oft ſhall " my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven " times? Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee, Until " ſeven times: but, Until ſeventy times ſeven. Therefore is " the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which " would take account of his ſervants.—Shouldſt not thou al- " ſo have had compaſſion on thy fellow-ſervant, even as I " had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered " him unto the tormentors, till he ſhould pay all that was " due unto him. So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do " alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every " one his brother their treſpaſſes." Suitable to our Lord's great ſcope in this chapter, where the rule of diſcipline is laid down, are theſe exhortations of the Apoſtle, Rom. xii. 9. 10. 16. " Let love be without diſſimulation.—Be kindly " affectioned unto one another, with brotherly love, in ho- " nour preferring one another—Be of the ſame mind one " toward another. Mind not high things, but condeſcend " to men of low eſtate. Be not wiſe in your own conceit." Gal. v. 26. & vi. 1. 2. " Let us not be deſirous of vain glo- " ry, provoking one another, envying one another. Bre- " thren, if a man be overtaken in a fault,—reſtore ſuch an " one in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt " thou alſo be tempted. Bear ye one anothers burthens, " and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt." Eph. iv. 1. 2. 3.—" Walk " worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all " lowlineſs and meekneſs, with long ſuffering, forbearing one " another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the " ſpirit in the bond of peace," Phil. ii. 1.—5. See alſo to this purpoſe what our Lord ſays on this ſame ſubject record- ed by the other evangeliſts, Mark ix. from ℣ 23. to the end. " Have ſalt in yourſelves, and have peace one with another." Luke ix. 46.—50. and xvii. 1.—5.

Now, ſeeing our Lord plainly intends the maintaining of this brotherly love among his diſciples, in giving this rule with reſpect to binding and looſing, it is plain they muſt all have a hand in it, and it cannot be tranſacted without them. The treſpaſs that he ſpeaks of in our brother is ſuch as may give us juſt ground to ſuſpect him, or may cool our brotherly love to him, and our dealing and the church's dealing with him is for gaining him, and for his recovery and edification

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in love. If he continue obſtinately in his treſpaſs, and hear not the church, he diſcharges us from the duties of brotherly love to him.

4. We may likewiſe notice, that in this great matter of binding and looſing, the diſciples muſt meet together "in the "name of the Lord Jeſus;" not in their own names. It is his buſineſs they are doing, not their own: and it muſt be done by agreement, not through ſtrife, or by parties overruling one another, Jam. iii. from ℣ 13. to the end. And further, it muſt be managed by "the word and prayer," the proper weapons of the church. It muſt not be carried on with worldly wiſdom, which defiles the temple of God; and as to which a man muſt "become a fool, that he may be wiſe," 1 Cor. iii. 16.—19. Neither is there any worldly power in this diſcipline, or belonging to it. Human laws, with civil ſanctions, have no place here; but the ſpirit and power of the Lord Jeſus, in whoſe name the thing is done, 1 Cor. v. 4.

"If he will not hear thee.——If he neglect to hear the "church. Again I ſay unto you, that if two of you ſhall "agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, "it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, "there am I in the midſt of them."

Now, this diſcipline conſiſts, 1. In the admitting or receiving of the diſciples into the church, in the cenſuring of offending brethren unto excommunication, and in abſolving the penitent, Matth. xviii. 5. Acts ii. 41. Matth. xviii. 15. 16. 17. 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. 6. 7. 8. 2. Unto this diſcipline is alſo reckoned the admitting and ſetting apart of men to bear office in the church, and the ſetting of them aſide. As to the firſt of theſe, we have an inſtance of it, Acts vi. in the ordination of the firſt deacons in the church at Jeruſalem; where we ſee what is the people's part, and what is the part of the elderſhip, in that matter. We have alſo an account of the ſetting apart of a diſciple to bear office among the apoſtles in the room of Judas. There was ſomething there extraordinary; as, the qualifications of the perſon, and the caſting of lots; becauſe it behoved the apoſtolic call to be immediate. But there was ſomething in that tranſaction agreeing with the ordination of ordinary officers, and which ſerves for a precedent. See Acts i. 16. 21. 22. 23. We have not ſuch a particular account of the ordination of elders in a church. We hear of the ſetting apart of Paul and Barnabas to preach the goſpel through the world, by the preſbytery at Antioch;

Antioch; and of Timothy to the work of an evangeliſt, by the "laying on of the hands of the preſbytery" of ſome other church: but of the ſetting of elders in a church we have not an account ſo particular. Only, from Acts xiv. 23. we may gather, that they were ſet apart to their office, after the ſame manner as the deacons, Acts vi. Conſidering what has happened in after-ages about ordination, (the holding of ſome for miniſters, becauſe they have been brought through ſome forms, without being qualified for that office by Jeſus Chriſt, or accepted by his people; and the rejecting of others qualified by Chriſt, and accepted by his diſciples, becauſe they have not paſſed through all the forms that ſome men judge neceſſary), it may be conceived, that there is a providence in the ſcripture's ſpeaking not ſo full and clear about ſome things in their ordination. The moſt ſucceſsful miniſter that ever was in Scotland, Mr Robert Bruce, never received, nor would admit of the very ſcriptural ceremony of "laying on of hands *," in his ordination to the miniſtry; but he was notably furniſhed by Chriſt, and obliged in his conſcience to uſe his talent, and was heartily accepted by the diſciples, and had his miniſtry "crowned with ſucceſs."

As to the ſetting aſide of church-officers, particularly falſe teachers, we have a general rule to the elders at Epheſus, "to take heed to themſelves as well as to the flock;" and the diſciples are commanded to "beware of them," and not to "hear them," or "receive them." And we may find excommunication, the cenſure common to them with other diſciples, inflicted on them: but of that which goes now under the name of ſuſpenſion or depoſition, we have no inſtance nor example in all the word of God, nor any rule laid down for it further. And yet we have heard ſome, in a fever of national zeal, crying out, that ſuſpenſion is God's great ordinance, which they were highly bound in conſcience to obſerve, and which they reckoned other mens conſciences could not eaſily withſtand.

IV. There remains yet a fourth thing in the propoſition, which deſerves ſerious conſideration; and it will be the clearer unto us, that we have conſidered what is alledged on the foregoing heads.

If Jeſus Chriſt hath ſubjected a congregation of his, with its preſbytery, in its diſcipline, unto any juriſdiction under heaven, the propoſition is falſe, and muſt be rejected; if he

* See the firſt book of diſcipline.

hath not, then it is clear and manifeſt: therefore the ſcripture muſt be carefully ſearched upon this head; and till ſomething be produced from thence to make it appear, that he hath ſubjected a church of his in this matter, unto any juriſdiction under heaven, the propoſition muſt hold good.

But ſome things may be ſaid from the ſcriptures, which may ſerve to manifeſt the truth of the propoſition to them that take to themſelves no other rule in theſe matters but the word of God.

If we look through all the inſtances of diſcipline recorded in the word, we ſhall find, if we have conſidered what is before ſaid, they went not beyond a congregation and its preſbytery.

The ſame thing appears from the fundamental rule of diſcipline, of which we have been ſpeaking, Matth. xviii. 15. to 20. It is thus: "If thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, "go, and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if "he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy brother. But if "he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two "more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every "word may be eſtabliſhed. And if he ſhall neglect to hear "them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear "the church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and "a publican. Verily I ſay unto you, Whatſoever ye ſhall "bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye "ſhall looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven. Again I ſay "unto you, That if two of you ſhall agree on earth, as "touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for "them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or "three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the "midſt of them."

Much duſt has been raiſed to obſcure theſe plain words; and odd ſhifts have been made about the import of the word *church* here. But it is plain, that our Lord gives here a ſtanding rule for diſcipline among his diſciples, in the kingdom of heaven, unto the end of the world; and that the import of the word *church* muſt be taken from the apoſtles, who have more fully laid open to us the words "that began "to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf," in his miniſtry on the earth. We have already noticed, that a church-repreſentative, as it is called, is an utter ſtranger to the apoſtolic ſtyle and way of writing; and we have heard the account they give of a viſible particular church. It is alſo very plain, that our Lord ſpeaks here of a particular viſible church, before which

which the brethren may bring their cauſe, and which the treſpaſſing brother muſt hear: ſo that we can be in no great ſtrait to underſtand what is meant by the *church* in that notable text; and ſo to underſtand where the power of this binding and looſing is lodged. But after the offending brother has neglected to hear the one or two more, where goes the offended brother next to tell his treſpaſs? Is he at firſt to leap over the congregation whereof he is a member, with its preſbytery? Or is his firſt ſtep beyond that? No, this cannot be ſaid. And where ſhould he go next? Or if the other brother judge himſelf leſed, where ſhould he go for redreſs? No where that our Lord ſpeaks of, but heaven.

Without queſtion, the congregation of which the two brethren are members, and wherein they have been walking together in brotherly love and communion, with the preſbytery of that congregation, their immediate overſeers, are the fitteſt of any to determine in this matter. And our Lord is very particular in telling the ſteps that the offended brother is to take: "Tell him his fault; take with thee one or two "more; tell it to the church." But there it lands, and further it goes not, if the treſpaſſer hear not the church. Yet it is pleaded, that becauſe the offended brother muſt go firſt to the treſpaſſer, and he muſt hear him; and then to the one or two more, and he muſt hear them next; and then to the church; therefore, by parity of reaſon, there muſt be a going from inferior to ſuperior church-judicatures. But better reaſon requires, that Chriſt's ſervants ſhould ſtop where he would have them ſtop; and what he takes wholly in his own hand, no judicature on earth can take from him. He alſo is wiſe, and foreſaw all the conſequences that we have ſeen or can ſee; and he knew beſt what is for his own glory, and the unity and peace of his people, and the advancement of his kingdom: "For what can the man do that cometh after "this King?"

The account we have of the firſt churches ſet up by him after his aſcenſion, as patterns to all that ſhould follow after, is altogether agreeable to this. They were no more but congregations, as has been ſhewn, and they had every one their own preſbytery: they bound and looſed in a way of diſcipline, 1 Cor v 2 Cor. ii. And they are not ſubjected herein unto any juriſdiction, but that of Chriſt in heaven, who alſo is in the midſt of them that are duly gathered in his name. Therefore when the apoſtles ordained elders in every church, and left them, they did not commend them to the care of any ſuperior judicature,

or to the care of a dioceſan biſhop, or many biſhops joined together, and having a common overſight and juriſdiction over them: but commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed, as now wanting nothing to complete their church ſtate and order, Acts xiv. 21. 22. 23. Tit. i. 5. To the ſame purpoſe we may obſerve, how Paul takes his leave of the elders of Epheſus, when he tells them, he ſhould ſee them and that church no more, Acts xx. He commends the flock to their diligent care, and calls them to "take heed to "themſelves;" but not a word of a ſuperior judicature; not an inſinuation of an advice to have recourſe to it, or to any thing of that kind; but to "the Lord," and to "the word of "his grace." And yet he forewarns them of that very caſe, for which ſome men judge a ſubordination of judicatures abſolutely neceſſary. He tells them, that, after "his departing, "grievous wolves ſhould enter in among them, not ſparing "the flock;" and that of their ownſelves "men ſhould ariſe "ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after "them." Here was occaſion to ſpeak of a ſuperior judicature, if the Lord Jeſus had ſeen occaſion for it. And what remedy does his Apoſtle propoſe for it? Not that which man's wiſdom judgeth beſt, but a remedy very agreeable to the ſpirit of the goſpel, and the mind of Chriſt. "Take "heed," ſays he, "unto yourſelves, and to all the flock. "——For I know this, that after my departing ſhall grie"vous wolves," &c. "Therefore watch; and remember, "that by the ſpace of three years I ceaſed not to warn "every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I "commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, "which is able to build you up, and give you an inheri"tance," &c. His diſcourſe is well worth the conſidering to the end of it.

Binding and looſing is an ordinance of Chriſt; and if it be done agreeable to his word, in the way wherein he hath appointed it to be done, then it is alſo done by him in heaven: and we ſee he has left this matter in the hands of a congregation of his with its preſbytery, with a promiſe of being in the midſt of them; ſo that they have power from him to aſſemble in his name, and bind and looſe, being therein made accountable to no other lord or lords but himſelf alone. Thus, every "dwelling-place of Mount Zion," every goſpel-church, having its "pillar of the cloud and of fire," according to the prophecy, Iſ. iv. 5. as the national congregation had its "pil-

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" lar of the cloud and of fire," of old, has all power of diſci-pline within itſelf.

Let us now ſee what is produced from the word with any colour againſt this. Firſt, we are told of general rules laid down in the word, which muſt neceſſarily carry us beyond a congregation with our diſcipline. And what are theſe rules? They are theſe: " The ſpirits of the prophets are ſubject to " the prophets;" and, " Let all things be done decently and " in order," 1 Cor. xiv. 31. 32. 33. 40. But from that context, and the epiſtle, it is viſible, theſe rules are laid down for a congregation meeting from time to time in one place, to propheſy, and hear propheſying, and to partake of the Lord's ſupper: and the Apoſtle tells them, " God is not the " author of confuſion, but of peace," and this in all the churches of the ſaints. So that theſe rules can carry us no further than congregations or churches of ſaints.

Further, there has been much labour about that tranſaction which we have recorded Acts xv.; and that which ſome men intend at firſt to make out from thence is this: That, upon a diviſion ariſing in a church, as in Antioch, which they cannot heal themſelves, they ſhould go out unto a council, who have power and authority to determine in the caſe, make decrees about it, and lay burdens on the diſciples and churches. This is all that can be offered to be proved from that paſſage. From this, when they think they have made it evident, there are inferences made, and concluſions of this ſort eſtabliſhed, as having the ſtamp of divine authority upon them, *viz.* That there ought to be a national church, with a ſtated ſubordination of ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial and national ſynods, or general aſſemblies. Every body may ſee, it will take no few conſequences to bring the ſtamp of divine authority from Acts xv. upon all this order and government of the church. And after all that has yet appeared from that paſſage of God's word, it will not carry us beyond a church or congregation of Chriſt with our diſcipline, nor ſhew us any juriſdiction over them in that matter.

For, 1. It has not yet been ſhown, nor can be, that there is any thing more in that matter, than an occaſional ſubmiſſion, by the congregation at Antioch, unto " the apoſtles and " elders of the congregation" at Jeruſalem, of a queſtion, a point of doctrine, wherein they were the only fit perſons to decide and determine. This point nearly concerned the practice of the Gentile diſciples at Antioch, and throughout the world. They had received the goſpel from out of the church at Jeruſalem;

ruſalem; and ſome came from thence, teaching them, that circumciſion, and the keeping of the law of Moſes, was neceſſary unto their ſalvation; and made a diviſion among them. None were ſo fit to determine in this caſe as the elderſhip of the church at Jeruſalem, which conſiſted of Jews, and where were the apoſtles. The church at Antioch ſubmits it to them; but we do not hear of any point of diſcipline ſubmitted: and the apoſtles and elders determine in it, with the conſent of the whole church in Jeruſalem. So that, even until now, we have not got out among congregations; and ſuch a practice may take place to the end of the world among them.

2. Nor has it ever yet been ſhown, that this meeting at Jeruſalem, whatever it was, exerciſed any diſcipline over any church or church-member at that time. They condemned the doctrine of the falſe teachers, who troubled the diſciples with their words, and ſubverted their ſouls, and laid heavy burdens upon them with their doctrine. But did they ever exerciſe any diſcipline about them? Nothing like it: they leave that entire to the churches where they came, or where they ſhould enter: and there was nothing of it in the queſtion and caſe ſubmitted to them. Thus it holds true, for what appears from Acts xv. that Jeſus Chriſt hath not ſubjected a church of his, with its preſbytery, unto any juriſdiction in its diſcipline. And in this ſtate remained the churches of Chriſt till towards the end of the ſecond century, when ſynods and councils began to be held upon the controverſy about Eaſter; and theſe might have been as well unheld, for any advantage the churches had by them as to unity and peace. But thus uniformity, and impoſitions, and councils commenced; and how far the catholic unity and peace of the diſciples of Chriſt has been advanced by them, the experience of all ages will declare. Yet it muſt be owned, that they have been in ſome things uſeful, and that they might be tolerable, if they did not aſſume to themſelves that power which Jeſus Chriſt hath lodged elſewhere, "nor lay any bur-" den upon the diſciples," which it "did not ſeem good to "him to lay upon them."

Thus far we have been conſidering the ſenſe of the propoſition which was to be explained, and comparing it with the word of God, the only rule by which the truth or falſehood of it can be determined; and ſo we have had occaſion to take a view of the plan of a goſpel-church, laid down to us by Chriſt and his apoſtles. It is owned, that, in this view,

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it is not agreeable to the wiſdom of this world, to which the whole of the true goſpel of Chriſt is diſagreeable; and that there may be many plauſible reaſonings againſt it, by them that are fond of that wiſdom, as there are againſt all the parts of the goſpel of Chriſt. But there are theſe things that may be ſaid in the behalf of it.

1. It is the moſt agreeable to all conditions and circumſtances wherein the church of Chriſt or his diſciples can be in this world, eſpecially to times of perſecution; and perſecution is the moſt ordinary lot of the diſciples and true church of Chriſt in this world, Matth. xvi. 21.—26. Mark viii. 34. 2 Tim. iii. 12. 13. In the moſt peaceable times, when the powers of the earth are employed to divert the violent courſe of perſecution, we are told, "the dragon will be making war "with the remnant of the woman's ſeed, that keep the com- "mandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus "Chriſt," Rev. xii. 16. 17.

2. It interferes the leaſt of all with Cæſar's kingdom, and can give the leaſt diſturbance to the kingdoms of this world; and it is moſt agreeable to our Lord's account of his kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. The congregational frame, as it has been deſcribed from the word of God, is far leſs intangled with the matters of ſtate in the kingdoms of this world, than any other frame of the church: and if the thoughts of Chriſt's diſciples about the church were regulated by his word, their conſciences would ſoon be freed from many intanglements they have come under by their principles about a national ſtate of the church interfering with Cæſar's kingdom.

3. It is moſt agreeable to the ſpirit of the goſpel, and to the ſtrain of the New Teſtament, particularly to our Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, as has been ſhewed; and to what is ſo frequently ſaid, in the word of God, againſt the pride and lordſhip of the miniſtry over God's heritage. If the plan of a goſpel-church given in the New Teſtament had continued, Antichriſt had never been. Therefore we find the Apoſtle, when warning the church of the Theſſalonians of Antichriſt, gives them this direction: "Therefore, "brethren, ſtand faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have "been taught, whether by word or our epiſtle," 2 Theſſ. ii. 15.

4. There is no other ſtate of the church wherein all the diſciples of Chriſt will more eaſily agree, when they take the word of God alone for their rule in this matter, and when other frames of the church which they are contending for are

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ſtripped of all the worldly privileges that attend them. Chriſt has pointed out to us in his word what is neceſſary in this matter, and what all contending parties muſt own to be neceſſary; but the diſputes, wars, and fightings, have been about things that man's wiſdom ſaw further neceſſary, as if his inſtitution of a goſpel viſible church had not been ſufficient to anſwer all the ends for which he appointed it. But if we ſhould take that wherein all the contending parties of Chriſt's diſciples are agreed in this matter, it will be found to come neareſt to that which has been deſcribed.

5. There is no other ſtate of the church better for preſerving and propagating the truth of the goſpel, in the purity and power of it: therefore ſuch churches as we have been ſpeaking of, are compared, by the Lord himſelf, to golden candleſticks for holding the light. It is true, that thoſe of the congregational way in England did, to their great reproach, ſinfully graſp at ſecular power, and upon that project became one party of this world with the ſectaries; yet the doctrine of the goſpel has been preſerved in greater purity in thoſe churches than in other churches of another frame, if we take the preaching in them, and the profeſſion of the members, and not merely public ſubſcribed forms, as the rule of our judging in this caſe *. And truly a church of that nature, which hath been deſcribed, cannot be nor ſubſiſt without the word of the goſpel coming in power, and bringing forth fruit; and without the ſpirit of Chriſt enabling the members to confeſs, that Jeſus is the Lord. But it is eaſy to conceive how other kind of churches may be without this.

6. If this account of a goſpel-church be liable to no other ſort of objections but what might be made againſt the apoſtolic churches, and if it be chargeable with no other kind of conſequences but the ſame, or ſuch like, as attended them, Chriſtians may know what to think of it. What would ſome men have thought, of the gathering of churches out of a national church, that had once expreſs divine inſtitution, and out of the ſynagogues, if they had lived in thoſe days? Further, if we ſhall hear of no other kind of arguing againſt it, but the old Popiſh cant, about the imperfection or darkneſs of the ſcriptures, the authority of the church, fathers, and martyrs, the unity and order of the church, the dreadful

* See the preface to the faith and order of the congregational churches.

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ſchiſm of the reformers and reformed churches, and the invalidity of their call to the miniſtry, and of their ordination; Proteſtants will know what to think of it. And then, if Preſbyterians be obliged to have recourſe to the ſame ſort of tools againſt it wherewith they themſelves have been long annoyed by the Epiſcopal men, ſome Preſbyterians, at leaſt, may not be altogether at a loſs how to form their thoughts about it.

7. It cannot overthrow the national eſtabliſhment, which is by law. For, 1*ſt*, It cannot come in the place of it, as another conſtitution of a national church might do. There is nothing of pariſhes with ſeſſions, nor preſbyteries, ſynods, and general aſſemblies, in all this view of the plan of a goſpel-church given us in the New Teſtament. 2*dly*, The national church is not ſettled by law upon the foundation of God's word, but upon the inclinations of the people of the land, which this frame that has been deſcribed can never pretend to; or if it might any where, for ſome time, pretend to it, as in the caſe of a colony, it could not ſubſiſt long without a conſiderable variation from itſelf. Of all ways of eſtabliſhing a national church by law, that of this nation is the beſt; and it were to be wiſhed, that they who have the management of ſuch a church would attend to the bottom on which it ſtands, the *peoples claim of right*. This might at leaſt be a check upon them in the affair of perſecution.

Chriſt's inſtitution of a goſpel-church ſeeks no more for its taking place in the world, but the natural right of mankind, liberty of conſcience; and cannot be diſturbed by the powers of the earth, but by their breaking in upon that; which if they do, there is one above them, who can order things ſo, that his kingdom will be advanced in ſpite of all oppoſition, and in the face of perſecution, as we ſee in the perſecution of the church at Jeruſalem.

3*dly*, This national church has never meddled much with the buſineſs of communion in the Lord's ſupper, but left it to the miniſters in their ſeveral pariſhes; and the Confeſſion of Faith affords them ſome direction whom to admit to that ordinance, and whom to debar. The practice of ſuch of them as do not admit the whole pariſh, but ſome way attend to the principles of the Confeſſion in that point, is, in effect, a gathering of a communicating church out of a pariſh, which ſome men call a church. And if two or three miniſters in a country ſhould admit none to that ordinance but proper objects of brotherly love, and join their communicants together with their own conſent, and overſee them unto the maintain-

ing of communion in brotherly love among them all, and unto their edification in that love, (while in all other things relating unto the pariſh-order, they ſubmit to the preſbytery, and are accountable to it), this would come pretty near unto the ſcriptural account of a goſpel-church; and if they that manage the national church could bear it, as they bear with meetings for prayer, it is not eaſy to ſee the harm it could do to their church. But if men will ſtill urge an inconſiſtency betwixt this national church and the inſtitution of Chriſt, and by any means make them incompatible, and ſo proceed to perſecute all of that way, then we may know what to do "for delivering our own ſouls," Rev. xviii. 4. Jer. li. 6. and l. 8. and muſt change our thoughts of the national church, that hitherto has been ſtated in oppoſition to Antichriſtian tyranny.

And this may ſerve for clearing, how far a practice ſuitable to the propoſition may take place under the preſent eſtabliſhment, or without prejudice to it. If any want to be further ſatisfied on this head, they may ſee what is ſaid upon it by the compilers of the faith and order of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy 1658. They ſpeak thus in their account of the inſtitution of churches, and the order appointed in them by Jeſus Chriſt, par. 14. "However, they "who are engaged in the work of public preaching, and enjoy the public maintenance upon that account, are not "thereby obliged to diſpenſe the ſeals to any other than ſuch "as (being ſaints by calling, and gathered according to the "order of the goſpel) they ſtand related to as paſtors or "teachers; yet ought they not to neglect others, living "within the parochial bounds; but, beſides their conſtant "public preaching to them, they ought to inquire after their "profiting by the word, inſtructing them in, and preſſing "upon them (whether old or young) the great doctrines of "the goſpel, even perſonally and particularly, ſo far as their "ſtrength and time will admit."

Some conſiderations that prove, that communicating with perſons that receive unworthily, doth not make a perſon an unworthy receiver.

1. "EVery man ſhall bear his own burden," Gal. vi. 5. If another be wicked, how can his wickedneſs unſettle my faith, or diſorder my devotion, except I conſent

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to his impiety, or ſuffer myſelf to be enticed by it? He that is free from the other's offence, ſhall be freed alſo from the penalty due to the offence, and then what hurt can I receive from an ill man's communicating in my company? Why ſhould I ſhare in his guilt, when I both abhor it, and keep myſelf from the infection? "The ſoul that ſins ſhall die" is God's ſtanding rule. If therefore I approach with a practical faith, and another with unbelief, or, which is all one, with a "faith without works," ſhall his "unbelief make the faith "of God of no effect?" Rom. iii. 3.

2. What hurt did the gueſts receive at the wedding-feaſt, Matth. xxii. 11. 12. by eating with the man who had no "wedding-garment?" Were they rejected by the maſter of the feaſt, becauſe they feaſted in his company? No; all that came adorned with a ſuitable temper, and in whoſe "ſpirit there was no guile," received the careſſes of the King, and none but the profane wretch felt the thunder of the Prince's anger: As he was ſingular in his ſin, ſo was he ſingular in his puniſhment. The maſter doth not ſo much as frown upon the reſt, doth not ſo much as give them an angry word; nor doth he expoſtulate with them, why they did bear him company? They charitably believed he was a good man, becauſe he was invited with them.

3. If I ſee another man, whom I know to be or to have been a notorious ſinner, ſit down by me at this holy table, he muſt not therefore be an object of my ſcorn, but of my pity and compaſſion. I can make an excellent uſe of ſeeing him in my company: for I can pray for him, and beg of God, that he would overawe his ſpirit with a ſenſe of the death of Chriſt, and ſtrike him into repentance and humiliation; I can intreat my heavenly Father to give him a ſight of the error of his ways; I can pray, that his ſight of the bleeding Jeſus may work upon his ſoul, and fill his heart with holy compunctions, and his eyes with tears; I can pray, that, after this communion, he may take heed and ſin no more: and where I do ſo, I do at once exerciſe my pity, and raiſe mine own devotion; and this, ſure, cannot make me an unworthy receiver.

4. Who hath given me a key to other mens hearts, whereby I can judge, at the receiving of the ſacrament, that my neighbour receives unworthily? How do I know, but that he who was vicious a week ago, may become a penitent that day? or, who aſſures me, that he who caſt God's laws behind him yeſterday, may not this day cry out, "O wretched man

" that I am!" Who bids me trouble my head about another's receiving, when I have enough to do with mine own heart? and, while I give myſelf liberty to judge another, is it not a very great ſign that I am not very ſenſible of mine own vileneſs? If I give myſelf to cenſoriouſneſs at ſuch times, I loſe my charity and humility; and if the rule be, to eſteem others better than ourſelves, I do not very heartily obey that precept, while I ſuffer my mind to dwell upon other mens faults and errors. Chriſtianity bids me have humble thoughts of myſelf; and if I think that all that receive with me may be, for ought I know, better than myſelf, I aſſuredly prepare for God's favour, who ever " gives grace to the " humble."

5. If Judas the traitor was preſent at this ſacrament, as well as the other apoſtles, and his being preſent did not make the reſt unworthy receivers, why ſhould I think, that a wicked man's coming with me to this table ſhould make me one? That Judas was preſent at the ſacrament, we have the concurring teſtimony of three evangeliſts; for they all confeſs, that Jeſus " ſat down with the twelve to the eating;" and while they were eating, Jeſus adminiſtered the holy ſacrament unto them. And whereas it is objected, that the ſacrament could not have been conveniently adminiſtered if the traitor had been preſent; that is a ſuppoſition which contradicts the matter of fact recorded by the evangeliſts; and who can judge ſo well of the conveniency or inconveniency of things as Chriſt himſelf? If Chriſt thought it convenient to give it him, who can ſay it was not ſo? Nor could the diſciples be much ſurpriſed at it, when they had ſo often heard their maſter ſay, that " the tares and the wheat muſt grow together " until the harveſt," and that the " kingdom of heaven," or the church-militant, " was like a net, containing good fiſh " and bad;" and though the words of Chriſt uſed in this ſacrament, " This is my body, which is given for you," and " This is the new teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for " you, for the remiſſion of ſins," cannot be directly applied to Judas; yet, ſince theſe bleſſings are promiſed conditionally in other places of ſcripture, they might belong to Judas conditionally, in caſe he repented, or " brought forth fruits meet " for repentance," as they belonged to the other diſciples abſolutely, becauſe their hearts were ſincere and without hypocriſy. Nor is it ſtrange that Chriſt ſhould ſay, in the preſence of Judas, " I will not henceforth drink of the wine " until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom;

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for there is nothing more common in the writings of the apoſtles, when they addreſs themſelves to a whole church, than to apply to them in general the promiſes of the goſpel, though true believers only have a right to them; and therefore, when Chriſt ſpoke theſe words to the diſciples, Judas being preſent, it was enough that they belonged to the major part of them, and thoſe that were qualified for that mercy might appropriate it to themſelves. But it is uſually pleaded, that if Judas was preſent at this ſacrament, yet ſtill he had a good outſide; he was far from being a ſcandalous ſinner, ſo that the congregation could not be offended. But this argument is of no weight at all: for, whether he were a ſcandalous ſinner or no, as long as Chriſt had declared him a devil and a traitor, it was as much as if he had been a ſcandalous ſinner; and the diſciples might be as confident of it, as if they had ſeen him run into exceſs of riot: ſo that Judas being preſent at the ſacrament, and his preſence not interfering with the worthy receiving of the other diſciples, it follows, that another man receiving unworthily, cannot make us, that come with ſuitable virtues, unworthy receivers. And yet, after all this, I would not be underſtood, as if ſcandalous ſinners were not to be ſeparated from this holy table, by thoſe whoſe office it is to forbid and hinder them; but then it is fit withal that the church ſhould excommunicate ſuch perſons firſt, that there may be a mark ſet upon them, whereby we may know them to be ſo, and avoid their company. If the church, either by reaſon of the multitude of ſuch ſinners, or for want of ſufficient information, cannot, or through neglect doth not, a private Chriſtian is not therefore to be ſcandalized at ſuch perſons when they come to the ſacrament, nor think himſelf therefore an unworthy communicant becauſe ſuch are preſent, there being no public mark ſet upon them, whereby he is authoriſed not to eat with them.

The LETTER written in anſwer to the preceding paper.

SIR,

AT your deſire I have conſidered the paper you ſent me, containing ſome conſiderations that prove, that communicating with perſons that receive unworthily, doth not make a perſon an unworthy receiver.

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For my part, this anſwer might be ſufficient, That I agree with the propoſition which is laid down to be proven: for, in the pureſt external communion that can be expected in a viſible church, there will be hypocrites, fooliſh virgins with the wiſe, Matth. xxv. from the beginning, and branches in Chriſt not bearing fruit, John xv. from the beginning. Theſe may receive unworthily, though they be not diſcerned ſo to do by any beſides him "before whom all things are naked "and open." Their receiving unworthily is ſo far from making believers joined with them unworthy receivers, that it can in no wiſe touch them; ſeeing none but the ſearcher of the hearts can meddle with it. Real believers, not ſo ſcandalous as to be excommunicated from that ordinance of the ſupper, may receive unworthily; as appears from the Apoſtle's diſcourſe on that ſubject to the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. xi. For he ſpeaks of ſuch chaſtiſements as might befal juſtified perſons for their communicating unworthily: "When we are judged," ſays he, "we are chaſtened of the "Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world." And we cannot ſay, that partaking in the ſupper with a real believer, receiving unworthily, makes him that ſo partakes an unworthy receiver. Though yet, at the ſame time, it muſt be owned, that unworthy receiving, if it ſhall appear in them that we are bound to look upon as believers, and be tolerated in a church, will bring down divine judgments upon the church. Neither is communion with them that are not, by the law of Chriſt, to be looked upon as believers, ſcrupled at or refuſed, on this very account, that it makes them that hold ſuch communion unworthy receivers; but on the account of the nature of the ordinance, the communion that is proper to it, and ought therein to be held; and on the account of the command of Chriſt, forbidding communion with ſuch perſons.

It might be pleaded, that kneeling at the communion-table does not make him that ſo partakes an unworthy receiver; and yet Scottiſh Preſbyterians will not hereby juſtify that way of partaking: and ſome might perhaps contend, that partaking of the bread, if the cup ſhould be denied to the people, does not make the believer an unworthy receiver of the bread; yet no Proteſtant would by this juſtify himſelf in that way of receiving the Lord's ſupper.

If the author of this paper had ſeen meet to impugn the anſwer to the ſynod's query upon this ſubject, or what is advanced upon it in the Narrative, from p. 167. to p. 174. it

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might have ſerved better to clear this ſubject of difference, than the proof of a propoſition never denied by me.

But, upon a view of what is advanced in the proof of this propoſition, it would ſeem to me as if the author would have it thought, that we are not concerned with our fellow-communicants in the Lord's ſupper; and that to communicate with them that have no appearance of being diſciples of Chriſt, and are known to be wicked, cannot touch us at all in that ordinance. And if this be his ſcope, to make us eaſy with whom we communicate, I muſt differ from him; becauſe I ſee nothing in the word to give countenance to it, but very much againſt it.

I ſhall take a look of what he ſays on the five heads of argument, and conſider how far it ſerves to free us of all ſcruples at promiſcuous communion, and make us eaſy what they be with whom we communicate. And,

1. Is it ſo, That it belongs not to us to be ſatisfied, in the judgment of charity, concerning thoſe with whom we communicate; becauſe "every man ſhall bear his own burden?" If we look that context, we ſhall ſee, that as "every man "muſt bear his own burden" before the Lord, ſo it is the great duty of the diſciples of Chriſt to "bear one another's "burdens, and ſo fulfill the law of Chriſt," Gal. vi. 1.—5. Does not the new commandment of Chriſt oblige us to make a difference between the diſciples of Chriſt and the reſt of the world? to know them, do the peculiar duties of brotherly love to them, and to hold ſpecial communion with them our brethren "whom we have ſeen?" And is not this ordinance the higheſt inſtance of that communion, wherein the diſciples give the greateſt expreſſion of their love to one another? Are not we, in proving ourſelves and our own work, to have an eye upon this mark of love to our brethren whom we have ſeen, without which none of our works are good works, and without which we can "have no rejoicing in ourſelves?" See the firſt epiſtle of John. And is not every man "to bear "his own burden," with reſpect to this commandment of Chriſt, "at the laſt day?" See Matth. xxv. and 1 John iv. 17. 20.

I have heard it alſo alledged, "That becauſe we are called "to examine ourſelves, in order to our partaking of the "Lord's ſupper; therefore we are not concerned to inquire "about others, for making the judgment of charity about "them with whom we communicate." Yet, in that ſame context, the diſciples are called "to tarry one for another, "that

"that they come not together unto condemnation;" and they are diſtinguiſhed from other men, whom the Apoſtle calls "the world." This plainly imports, that they had to do with one another in coming together to eat the Lord's ſupper; and that every one of them was not to look to himſelf only, without regard to any other, or any concern to know whether they were communicating with diſciples or infidels. And further, it is plain, that their want of the exerciſe of brotherly love to one another in coming together, appearing in their not tarrying one for another, and in the diviſions that were among them, was one reaſon of their being chaſtened of the Lord, and of their coming together to condemnation. See 1 Cor. xi. from ℣ 17. to the end. If a man examine himſelf as he ought, he will ſee abundant reaſon in himſelf not to deſpiſe any of Chriſt's "little ones," and to make him judge charitably, and reckon himſelf "leſs than the leaſt" of them; and this is an excellent mean to preſerve from that pride and ſelf-conceit which is inconſiſtent with brotherly love. But if we examine ourſelves by the rules and marks laid down in the word of God, we ſhall find ourſelves concerned to make a difference between the little ones that believe in Chriſt, and the world; and that we have much to do with them, in coming together with them "to eat the Lord's ſupper," that we have not to do with the world.

If a believer, joined in partaking of the ordinance, and in church-communion, with an open unbeliever or wicked perſon, do abhor his guilt, and keep himſelf from the infection, he does well; but it muſt be at leaſt owned, he is not uſing the means appointed by Chriſt for that end; while he is yoked together in the moſt eminent part of Chriſtian communion with that perſon, and is declaring himſelf "one bread" and "one body" with him, by partaking with him in that "one bread," which is the "communion of the body of "Chriſt;" and this after Chriſt has commanded him to turn away from ſuch. See 1 Cor. chap. v. "Ye are puffed up, "and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this "deed may be taken away from among you. Your glorying "is not good. Know ye not, that a little leaven leaveneth "the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that "ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened," &c.

2. For what appears in the parable of the man among the gueſts wanting the wedding-garment, he is diſcerned by none but the all-ſeeing maſter of the feaſt, and might be the object of the brotherly love of the other gueſts, who might be approved

proved in the exerciſe of this love toward him as a ſuitable object of it, and yet he himſelf bear his own burden. The ground of their charity toward him could not be, that he was an object of the goſpel-call; for ſo were they that were invited and would not come; but that he appeared to them to give obedience to it, and joined himſelf with the gueſts, appearing to be a gueſt, and a partaker of the heavenly calling. Many ſuch objects of brotherly love will be found by the maſter of the feaſt at length to want the wedding-garment. But if our charity be to go upon a man's being invited by the goſpel-call unto fellowſhip with Chriſt and his people, then there will be as many objects of brotherly-love as there are hearers of the goſpel; and all to whom the goſpel is preached might, without more, partake of the Lord's ſupper; which muſt be a great abſurdity with them that are of the principles profeſſed in the church eſtabliſhed by law.

3. Without queſtion, a notorious ſinner is not to be the object of our ſcorn, but of our pity and compaſſion; and there are duties of benevolence and compaſſion, ſuitable to the goſpel, to be done toward that man: but is this to be our work about our fellow-communicants in partaking with them in that bread and cup? Be this exerciſe about the notorious ſinner what it will, it is not communicating; and if I be not otherwiſe employed in that ordinance, I am not communicating at all. If I ſhould pray that the Lord's ſupper may be a mean of converſion to ſuch a ſinner, I know not if I would be praying in faith: for that ordinance is no mean of Chriſt's appointment for that end. The preaching of the goſpel of Chriſt at a communion-table, (though that be not a proper way of doing it), may be a mean of converſion to a notorious ſinner, and a mean alſo of edifying a believer; but hearing the goſpel, though it be in faith, and communicating, are two very diſtinct things. An onlooker, that is not partaking in the bread and cup, may perceive a repreſentation of a crucified Chriſt in that bleſſed bread and cup, wherein he ſees others partaking, and perhaps may be very much affected with it; but it cannot be ſaid, that this perſon is communicating in the Lord's ſupper: and if there be no more but this in the caſe of a perſon ſitting at the table, and eating the bread and drinking the wine, without having any thing to do therein with his fellow-communicants, I very much queſtion if that perſon be communicating at all. We cannot expect that he who never "ſaw Chriſt," or "believed" in him as exhibited to all in the preaching of the goſpel, will "diſ-

" cern the Lord's body" in the ſupper as ſet forth there only to diſciples, to be diſcerned by them in their partaking of it together as one body, for the confirmation of their faith and love, and for " ſealing believers unto the day of redemption." We are not to deſpiſe, but pity and pray for a company of Infidels, Jews, Mahometans, or Heathens: but would it be lawful for us to partake with them in the Lord's ſupper (ſuppoſing them to be ſome way or other compelled to it) till we ſhould be ſatisfied of their converſion? or could we in that caſe exerciſe communicating graces with reſpect to them? And if we compare the condition of theſe infidels with that of infidels going under the Chriſtian name, and claiming intereſt in the Chriſtian privileges, we may come to find the other ſort of infidels having, in ſeveral reſpects, the better of them.

4. Chriſt has kept the key of hearts in his own hand; but, by his new commandment, he has injoined his diſciples the knowing and acknowledging of the proper objects of that peculiar brotherly love; elſe that his commandment would be in vain. For, if thoſe whom he commands us to love with this love, cannot be known by all his diſciples, diſtinguiſhed from others, to what purpoſe is this his commandment unto all the diſciples? And though he hath not given any of them the key to mens hearts, yet he hath pointed out to all, in his word, the objects of this brotherly love, with whom he commands us to hold communion, and thoſe from whom he commands us to turn away. Communicants muſt be the objects of this love, and we muſt know ſo much concerning them with whom we communicate, before we eat of that bread and drink of that cup with them: and ſo we have no occaſion for troubling ourſelves, in communicating, with cenſoriouſneſs, and dwelling upon one anothers faults; but we rather thus come together, every one of us fearing concerning himſelf, leſt he be the only perſon in all the company whom the Lord ſhall find wanting the wedding-garment.

As to what is ſaid of preparing for God's favour, by humble thoughts of myſelf; it is an unguarded expreſſion, that may be taken in a ſenſe very derogatory to God's grace, and there may be much abominable pride in applying after-this manner for God's favour in that ordinance.

However, it is ſafer to hold by the ſcripture way of ſpeaking: " He reſiſteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble; " and if we would judge ourſelves, we ſhould not be judged."

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5. As to Judas's communicating, ſee Gilleſpie, and what he ſays againſt Judas's being a partaker in the Lord's ſupper.

Yet let us ſuppoſe, that Judas "did eat of that bread, and "drink of that cup;" was not Judas then ſuch a perſon, in the eyes of the diſciples, that when the Lord told them, "one "of them ſhould betray him," they ſuſpected every one himſelf rather than Judas? And though the Lord had told them before, that one of them was a devil; yet none of them, for ought we hear, ſuſpected Judas, or could know, from any thing that our Lord ſaid, that it was he, till ſuch time as he had received the ſop, and immediately he went forth; ſo that the diſciples were called to no further communion with him, after he was thus diſcovered to the beloved diſciple. Our Lord, who alone knew their hearts, knew from the "beginning who ſhould betray him." Notwithſtanding this, he made him an apoſtle. No man would by this juſtify our ſetting apart of one to the miniſtry, whom we know certainly to be a devil and a traitor: neither will his admitting him to the ſupper, (which it can never be ſhown that he did), who, before his all-ſeeing eye, was a devil, give ground to his diſciples to admit thoſe, or to communicate with thoſe, whom they know to be ſuch, judging by what appears to man's eye. Our Lord, in giving the ſupper, acted as the prime miniſter of the New Teſtament, giving a pattern to his miniſters to follow in that matter; and none of them can copy after him in his omniſcience. He hath not given them the key to mens hearts, but reſerved it to himſelf, and left them to judge by what appears to them, according to his word.

The net, containing good and bad fiſh together, may ſome way anſwer unto the caſe of Judas's being among the diſciples. That parable ſpeaks of people gathered out of all nations into fellowſhip together, by the influence of the goſpel; and not by ſuch influence as has made many paſs under the Chriſtian name, that never felt any thing of the power of the goſpel gathering them with the people of Chriſt, unto the great reproach and diſhonour of that name, which at firſt belonged to none but diſciples, made ſo by the hand of the Lord with the goſpel, and gathered together by means of the goſpel, upon an appearance of the grace of God in them. See Acts xi. 19.—26. But there is another thing intended in the parable of the tares and the wheat; as is to be ſeen in the letter publiſhed by Walker.

As to what is ſaid of the words of the inſtitution: 1. I cannot approve of the ſtyle, ſpeaking as if Chriſt's blood had been

ſhed conditionally for the remiſſion of ſins, and the condition repentance, with its fruits, and ſincerity; and as if Chriſt's blood, while ſaid to be ſhed for men conditionally, became abſolute to them that fulfill the condition of repentance and ſincerity. Neither can I think, that thoſe who are pleaſed with ſuch a ſtyle will be able to maintain, that all ought to partake in the Lord's ſupper, to whom they think that may be ſaid conditionally, "This blood was ſhed *for you*, for "the remiſſion of ſins;" for that, they think, may be ſaid to all mankind, without exception. 2. Neither am I ſatisfied in what he ſays of the apoſtles ſpeaking of the major part in the churches: for I cannot be certain, that the major part in theſe churches were true believers and ſincere penitents; or, if he will have it, that the major part in theſe churches were real believers. What manner of churches, then, were they? It is not eaſy to ſuppoſe, that a church made up according to the ſcope of this paper, will conſiſt, for the moſt part, of real believers. I have better ground to think, that the apoſtles ſpeak not of them, as ſeeing their hearts, and finding the major part real believers; but in the judgment of charity, upon the outward evidence they all gave "of faith "in the Lord Jeſus, love to all the ſaints," and the Chriſtian hope. Sure the Apoſtle ſpeaks not of the major part of the church of the Theſſalonians, 2d Epiſt. i. 3. If we look to the two prime Chriſtian churches, Jeruſalem, the firſt of the Jews, and Antioch, the firſt of the Gentiles, we ſhall ſee of what ſort of perſons they were made up, and that there was no ſearching of hearts in the caſe, but a poſitive judgment of charity upon what appeared. And certainly the firſt of a kind is a very good rule for all that follows of the ſame kind. See Acts ii. 37. 40. 41. 42. and Acts xi. from ℣ 19. to the end. According to this judgment of charity, this could have been ſaid of Judas, and the diſciples could all have held communion with him upon that footing. As for what appeared about him to the omniſcient eye, the diſciples had nothing to do with that; and our Lord gave not his ordinance after the rule of his omniſcience, and his judgment thereby, but in ſuch a manner as might be imitated by his ſervants in all ages. Yet, for my part, I ſee nothing that ſhould move me to think, that Judas was a partaker in that ordinance. There appears to me no ground for ſuch a thought in the evangeliſts. And by what is above ſaid, you may perceive how little ground there is for all this noiſe about Judas, even ſuppoſing him to have been a partaker.

After

After all that the author of this paper has ſaid to the contrary, he is ſtill for a ſeparation in this matter of communion in the Lord's ſupper; but he leaves the marks in the dark, as a ſecret to be kept among the clergy, to whom he commits the whole affair: ſo that we are to forbear communion with none in the Lord's ſupper but ſuch perſons as have a public mark ſet upon them by them, authoriſing us not to eat with them; and if they neglect to do their duty, in ſeparating from that holy table ſuch as ought to be ſeparated from it, there is nothing left to the people in that caſe, but to follow them, and hold communion in that ordinance with as many as they think fit to admit. But ſeeing the author of this paper is againſt the admiſſion of all to that holy table, I would deſire to know, if he hold this only as a common prevailing opinion, which he thinks reaſonable, or if he himſelf be ſatisfied in the truth of it, upon ſcripture-evidence? And if he conſider the ſcripture-evidence for it, I am miſtaken if he do not find, that the people, the communicants, have a concern in it, and a duty incumbent on them about it, as to which they muſt be anſwerable to the head of the church, as well as their officers, and that they ſhall bear their own burden with reſpect to this, as well as they. I ſhall freely own to the author of this paper, that if the overſeers of the communion of Chriſt's diſciples would do their duty in this matter, the people would have no juſt ground of offence, and would be "tranſgreſſors of the law "of Chriſt" if they gave their overſeers any diſturbance in that matter, and ſo ought to be marked: "For God is not "the author of confuſion," in the churches of the ſaints. And, on the other hand, if the overſeers of the church openly neglect their duty in this matter, I reckon he muſt alſo agree with me, that the diſciples of Chriſt have a judgment of diſcretion with reſpect to thoſe with whom he commands them to "walk in brotherly love" and Chriſtian communion, and thoſe from whom he commands them to turn away, and withdraw themſelves; and that it is in the power of none to oblige them to hold communion in the Lord's ſupper with any from whom he obliges them to withdraw.

We have had ſome conſiderations, on the one hand, tending to make us eaſy with whom we communicate, and to encourage us to continue in promiſcuous communion in the Lord's ſupper; and there are alſo ſome conſiderations, on the other hand, that ſerve to ſatisfy us, that it is our duty to forbear communion in the Lord's ſupper with them that have

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no appearance of being diſciples of Chriſt, believers in him, and are not objects of that brotherly love required in the new commandment; and to withdraw, in that ordinance, from every brother walking in open notour diſobedience to the commands of Chriſt, and to ſeek after ſuch communion in that ordinance as the Lord requires in his word, and in his new commandment.

1. They that believe there is ſuch a thing as Chriſtian communion, and a viſible communion of ſaints by profeſſion, muſt acknowledge, that the Lord's ſupper is the higheſt inſtance of that communion. It is peculiarly deſigned for this beyond any other ordinance of worſhip in a viſible church: for in our eating of that bread and drinking of that cup together, we have the cleareſt and moſt evident outward repreſentation made to us of the glorious myſtical union and communion in the body of Chriſt myſtical. Our myſtical union and communion with Chriſt is evidently ſet forth to the believer in this ordinance; ſo that the believer, in eating of that bread, and drinking that cup, may know the riches of that glorious myſtery, John vi. 56. 57. "He that eateth my fleſh, and "drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." And, at the ſame time, the myſtical union and communion of the members of Chriſt, in him crucified, is evidently ſet forth to the believer in our partaking all of that one bread and cup. 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. "The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs, is "it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread "which we break, is it not the communion of the body of "Chriſt? For we being many are one bread, and one body: "for we are all partakers of that one bread." If it were not ſo, why might not the Lord's ſupper be given where there is but one to receive it, as well as baptiſm? Now, if it be ſo, that there is, in that ordinance, an outward repreſentation made of the glorious myſtical union and communion of the members of the body of Chriſt, how is that repreſentation made to the believer, if it be not in the apparent members of Chriſt their partaking together in that one bread and cup of bleſſing? Thus they that partake together in the "cup of "bleſſing which we bleſs," and in that "bread which we "break," muſt look upon themſelves, if they would diſcern what is ſet before them in the ordinance, as very nearly related to one another, even as one bread and one body; and this by their being all partakers of that bread and cup which is the communion of the body and blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Now, in a mixed communion of apparent members of the

body

body of Chriſt, with them that have no appearance of being members of that body, this bleſſed repreſentation of the glorious union and communion in the myſtical body of Chriſt is deſtroyed; and further, we become as much one body and bread with them that appear not be members of Chriſt, as with them that do, as far as our partaking in that one bread can make us ſo: and how much this is conſiſtent with the nature of the ordinance, and the graces that ought ſuitably thereto to be exerciſed toward Chriſt, and toward one another, in it, we may ſee by what has been ſaid. This was the doctrine of the reformers. See the Palatine catechiſm, qu. 76. and 77.

"What is it to eat the body of Chriſt, and to drink his "blood that was ſhed?

"*Anſ.* It is not only with certain affiance of mind to lay "hold on the whole paſſion and death of Chriſt, and thereby "to obtain forgiveneſs of ſins, and life everlaſting*; but "alſo by the ſpirit of Chriſt, which dwelleth at one time both "in Chriſt and us, in ſuch ſort more and more to be united "unto his holy body†; that although he be in heaven and "we upon earth, yet, notwithſtanding, we are fleſh of his "fleſh and bone of his bone‡; and as all the members of "the body are quickened and governed by one ſoul, ſo are "we all by one and the ſame ſpirit‖.

"*Queſt.* 77. Where hath Chriſt promiſed, that he will as "certainly give unto the believer his body and his blood in "this manner to be eaten and drunk, as they do eat this "bread being broken, and drink this cup?

"*Anſ.* In the inſtitution of the ſupper, the words whereof "are theſe,—1 Cor. xi. 23. 24. 25. 26. Matth. xxvi. 26. "27. 28. Mark xiv. 22. 23. 24. Luke xxii. 19. 20. This "promiſe is repeated by Paul, when he ſaith,—1 Cor. x. 16. 17."

2. We are ſolemnly called and encouraged by great promiſes, not to be "unequally yoked together, believers with "unbelievers, and to come out from among them, and be "ſeparated," 2 Cor. vi. from ℣ 11. to the end. Whatever wrong uſe has been made of this place by them that have,

* John vi. 35. 40. 47. 48. 50. 51. 52. 54. 58.
† John vi. 55. 56. 57. Acts i. 3. 21. 1 Cor. xi. 26. Col. iii. 1.
‡ Eph. v. 30. 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
‖ John vi. 57. & xv. 1.—6. Eph. iii. 16. & iv. 15. 16. 1 John iii. 24. & iv. 13.

upon

upon unſcriptural grounds, ſeparated from the miniſters and people of Chriſt, and have made up themſelves into ſects and parties, quite off from the Chriſtian catholic footing; yet we muſt think this word of the Lord has ſome ſenſe, and that herein we are called to ſomething, which would be of great advantage to us, if we ſhall comply with the call.

But the great queſtion is, What this yoking together, and this ſeparation, ſhould mean? Marriage it cannot be: for ſuppoſing a believer to be yoked together in marriage with a very groſs unbeliever, can it be ſaid, that it is the great duty of the believer to come out from and be ſeparated from the unbelieving yoke-fellow in marriage? But this is the caſe here, that they who are unequally yoked together, believers with unbelievers, are called to come out from among them, and be ſeparate. Civil communion it cannot be either: for ſeparation in this reſpect would be to go out of the world, or turn monks, and tranſgreſs many commandments of Jeſus Chriſt. The Apoſtle here refers to the prohibition in the law, of yoking an ox and an aſs together; and ſpeaks of ſuch a yoke, wherein believers ought not to be yoked with unbelievers, becauſe of the unſuitableneſs of theſe two ſorts of perſons for that ſame yoke: and this he aggravates in ſeveral expreſſions: "What fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with un-" righteouſneſs? What communion hath light with darkneſs? " And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? or what part " hath he that believeth, with an infidel? and what agree-" ment hath the temple of God with idols?" And the Apoſtle ſpeaks here of ſuch a yoke as believers ought not to be joined in with unbelievers, becauſe of the unfitneſs of unbelievers for that yoke: "Be not unequally yoked together " with unbelievers:——For ye are the temple of God; as " God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; " and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. " Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſepa-" rate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive " you." Further, This is ſuch a yoking together, ſuch a communion and fellowſhip, ſuch a having part with and agreement with unbelievers, as whereby the church at Corinth, the people of Chriſt joined in a church there, were ſtraitened in their own bowels; for it is given as a direction to them, for their enlargement, when ſtraitened in their own bowels, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;" ſo that it is a direction of the ſame ſort with that which was given in the 5th chapter of the 1ſt epiſtle, "Know ye not that

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" a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? purge out there-
" fore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." And as he is calling them there to clear their church-communion of ſuch as were unworthy of it, ſo he does here. He had ſpoke of ſome among them that began to deny the reſurrection of the dead, after they had profeſſed the faith, 1 Cor. xv. and what he ſays here may point to them; but he extends his exhortation, and makes it more general, and calls for a ſeparation betwixt believers and unbelievers; no doubt, ſuch a ſeparation as the Corinthians were able to make, who could not ſearch mens hearts: and there may be alſo here ſome eye to the ſubject on which he inſiſts, 1 Cor. x. 14.—22.; compare Rev. ii. 14. And now, what is that yoke, that communion and fellowſhip, wherein believers muſt be by themſelves, and not with unbelievers, if it be not church-communion? And what part of Chriſtian communion is it, wherein they muſt not be yoked with them, if it be not the higheſt inſtance of it, the Lord's ſupper? The aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter, in their confeſſion, apply this text unto the ſubject of the Lord's ſupper; and they that have the utmoſt regard to the mind of that venerable body of men in all points, will not reckon this a falſe gloſs upon the place. And if it ſhall be granted, as it cannot well be denied, that this place of ſcripture points to church-communion, then let us conſider, whether this exhortation and ſolemn call, " Be not " unequally yoked," &c. be directed to the overſeers of the church of Corinth only, or to every church-member. And I reckon we can be in no ſtrait to find, that every Chriſtian is concerned in it, and will find himſelf obliged to anſwer the call; and while he thinks of doing ſo, he had need to take heed to the direction given in the firſt verſe of the following chapter. We might alſo obſerve, how the firſt converts anſwered that call, Acts ii. 40. " Save yourſelves from this " untoward generation. They that gladly received the " word, were added: and they continued ſtedfaſtly in the apo-
" ſtles doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and " in prayers."

3. Every one that profeſſes the faith of the goſpel, every diſciple of Chriſt, is bound to have a converſation becoming the goſpel; and it is the duty of the meaneſt diſciple of Chriſt to ſtudy this. The Apoſtle earneſtly exhorts the church at Philippi to this, Phil. i. 27. 28. " Only let your converſation " be as it becometh the goſpel of Chriſt: that whether I " come and ſee you, or elſe be abſent, I may hear of your

" affairs, that ye ſtand faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, " ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel; and in nothing " terrified by your adverſaries." We plainly ſee wherein it is that the apoſtle deſires to find the converſation of the Philippians, and of all ſuch after them, appearing ſuitable to the goſpel: he tells us, it will " be becoming the goſpel," if they be " ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving toge- " ther for the faith of the goſpel, againſt the adverſaries of " it;" and that ſo as he may either ſee it, being preſent among them, or hear of it being abſent, and hearing of their affairs. So that we may obſerve, that it is the faith of the goſpel in the open profeſſion of it that he is ſpeaking of, and calling us to ſtrive for againſt the adverſaries. And while we contend for the faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, as it is diſtinguiſhed from nature's light, and oppoſed to the wiſdom of man in the things of God; and as it is diſtinguiſhed from the law of Moſes, and oppoſed to Judaiſm; are we not alſo bound to contend for it, as it is the moſt " holy faith, the faith " once delivered to the ſaints," Jude 3. 19. 20. in oppoſition to a carnal, worldly, ſenſual profeſſion of faith, no wiſe influenced by the ſpirit of Chriſt in the goſpel, nor attended with good works? Further, we ſee the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of an open ſtrife for the faith in the profeſſion of it, againſt open adverſaries; for it is only ſuch a ſtrife that he could ſee or hear of, being abſent, and hearing of their affairs. And he is not ſo much ſpeaking of a man's ſtriving alone in this place, as of a company of Chriſtians living together in a place, and ſtriving together in a body, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind ſtriving together, ſo as one being preſent might ſee, and being at a diſtance from them might know no otherwiſe but by report. And this was the church at Philippi. Let them that ſpeak much of a " converſation becoming the go- " ſpel," conſider this, that where there is not ſuch a ſtrife for the faith of the goſpel as this, there there is ſomething very conſiderable wanting to make out a " converſation be- " coming the goſpel." If there be no room nor place now for an open ſtrife for the faith of the goſpel of Chriſt in the profeſſion of it, as it has been deſcribed, then there is no place among us at this day for that " converſation becoming " the goſpel" of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in this text: but if there be, as no doubt there is every where, in every place where there are ſuch as thoſe to whom the Apoſtle writes this epiſtle; then, if theſe ſhall be yoked together in partaking of that bleſſed bread and cup, which is the communion of the

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body and blood of Chriſt, and ſo become one bread and one body with them that cannot confeſs that faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, that "holy faith once delivered to the ſaints," and with the open adverſaries of that faith; might it not be thought, in that caſe, that the ſtrife of which the Apoſtle is ſpeaking is compoſed, and the fire that was kindled by the diſciples of Chriſt, in their being "joined in one ſpirit, with "one mind, ſtriving for the holy faith" of the goſpel againſt the adverſaries, is quenched and put out, now when the differing parties are joined together in the cloſeſt external bond of Chriſtian union and communion that can be thought of? And we need be at no loſs to ſee, if this exhortation be directed to the biſhops at Philippi only, or to all the ſaints there appearing ſo to be: and ſaints we muſt be, or no Chriſtians. Now, if you ſhall inquire, what we are contending for in this buſineſs about Chriſtian communion, particularly in the Lord's ſupper? our anſwer is, We are aiming at a "conver-"ſation becoming the goſpel," in ſtriving together for the holy faith of the goſpel of Chriſt, in oppoſition to a ſort of faith not influenced by the goſpel, not ſavouring of Chriſt, nor of his ſpirit, but dead, carnal, worldly, and fruitleſs, that paſſes under the name of the Chriſtian faith, and has come inſtead of the "faith once delivered to the ſaints." And "who is ſufficient for theſe things?" But the ſtrength of the Lord Jeſus is made perfect in weakneſs.

4. The exerciſe of brotherly love toward our fellow-communicants is neceſſary unto a right partaking with them in the Lord's ſupper, and there is no more place for the exerciſe of this grace toward our brethren, whom we have ſeen at a communion-table, than there is any where elſe, if our fellow-communicants be not proper objects of this love. I need not add to what is ſaid on this ſubject in the Narrative; only, if I be to profeſs brotherly love to my fellow-communicants, as I ſeem to do in the moſt eminent manner when I become one bread and one body with them, I cannot do this without abominable hypocriſy and diſſimulation, if I look not upon them as the ſaints and faithful in Chriſt: and therefore I may ſay with the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of church-communion, "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as "ye are unleavened. For Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for "us. Therefore let us keep the feaſt, not with old leaven, "neither with the leaven of malice and wickedneſs, but with "the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth." But I have wearied myſelf, and I fear will weary you, and I am in haſte;

and therefore I ſhall only put you in mind of another conſideration.

5. All the diſciples of Chriſt are by him inclined to a peculiar fellowſhip with their brethren; and it is very agreeable to the new nature in real believers to ſeek after ſeparate Chriſtian fellowſhip: therefore you have heard a great complaint of promiſcuous communion in the Lord's ſupper among them from time to time. If they have been conſcientiouſly diſſatisfied with it, and yet have continued in it, even when they ſaw no help for it, no appearance againſt it; and if in that caſe the Lord pitied them, as he pitied Iſrael according to the fleſh in Babylon, where they were mingled with the nations, and had not their liberty; they have reaſon to bleſs him for it: but now, when they are called to come out, and there is an appearance made againſt that with which they have all profeſſed diſſatisfaction, and that appearance every where oppoſed; how far can they be anſwerable to Jeſus Chriſt, if they continue in mixed communion and in bondage, and ſo do what in them lies to knock that in the head which they have been pretending conſcientiouſly to wiſh for and to advance, and promote that effectually which they have been ſo long groaning to be delivered from? Should any worldly inconveniency, or any carnal reaſonings and conſultings with fleſh and blood, againſt the word and call of Chriſt, and of their own conſciences, divert them, or any way terrify them, from going forth unto him without the camp bearing his reproach? "Here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek one to "come."

I am,

SIR,

Your's, &c.

The

The SPEECH of Mr JOHN GLAS before the Commiſſion of the General Aſſembly, March 11. 1730.

I Judge it my duty to lay before this commiſſion ſuch a ſtate of my difference from this national church, as may ſerve to ſhew how far it may juſtify the treatment I have met with upon it; and to manifeſt, that I differ from this church no farther than the word of God, as I underſtand it, obliges me to differ. And I am hopeful, that what I now offer, may ſerve to bring this proceſs to a ſpeedy iſſue, which is the thing I ſincerely deſire.

What lies now before the commiſſion to be conſidered as the matter of my condemnation, may be comprehended under the three following heads.

1. My refuſing to ſubſcribe the *Formula*, becauſe I cannot ſee the government of this national church by kirk-ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial ſynods, and general aſſemblies, to be founded in the word of God.

2. My refuſing to ſubſcribe ſome paſſages in the Confeſſion of Faith, touching the magiſtrate's power *circa ſacra*, and liberty of conſcience, with ſome propoſitions relative thereto, maintained by me.

3. My exerciſing the miniſterial office, after I was forbidden upon theſe grounds.

I. As to the firſt of theſe, I refuſe to ſubſcribe the *Formula*, becauſe I cannot ſee precept or example in ſcripture for the government of this national church by kirk-ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial and national ſynods; and I do not imagine, that the commiſſion will affirm there is ſuch a foundation in the word of God for the foreſaid government. And if it ſhould be my opinion, that it requires precept or example in God's word for ſuch a government to warrant me to declare, that it is founded in that word, or if I ſhould affirm, that church-courts, meeting in the name of Chriſt, require as much warrant in the word of God, as church-officers, acting in his name; I ſee not any propoſition in the public ſtandards of the church that condemns this: nor can I conceive how it ſhould be a ground of cenſure; ſince I have declared, that I look upon this as the beſt national eſtabliſhment, and that I am very far from deſiring to ſee it changed for another national church-government.

And

And though it be by me affirmed, that a congregation or church of Jeſus Chriſt, with its preſbytery, is, in its diſcipline, ſubject to no juriſdiction under heaven; yet I never intended by this to deny the ſubjection of a pariſh, with its kirk-ſeſſion, unto preſbyteries, ſynods, and aſſemblies. For, when the magiſtrate divides his ſubjects into parcels, to be taught by ſo many teachers, upon the encouragement by him afforded, the nature of the thing requires, that theſe teachers ſhould be ſubject to the overſight of ſuch as, by the law that affords them a maintenance, are appointed to overſee them, and to whom that law makes them accountable. But it will not be affirmed by the commiſſion, that theſe pariſhes, and their overſeers, are of the ſame kind with the firſt Chriſtian churches or congregations, and their preſbyteries: for theſe congregations were gathered together only by the goſpel; and were diſciples of Chriſt, voluntarily aſſociated for holding ſpiritual communion together, and for the obſervation of the laws of Chriſt, and the enjoyment of the ſpiritual privileges of his kingdom, which is not of this world, and they were governed by preſbyteries freely choſen and maintained by themſelves. Now ſeeing it is evident, theſe were quite different things from pariſhes and kirk-ſeſſions, as I cannot think but pariſhes are deſigned unto better ends than to make ſuch churches, as were from the beginning, uſeleſs, and ſet them aſide; ſo I cannot perſuade myſelf, that the commiſſion will judge it a cenſurable fault in me to hold, that, notwithſtanding of the order of pariſhes, it is ſtill lawful for miniſters and diſciples of Chriſt, to conform themſelves to the firſt Chriſtian churches, with their preſbyteries, 1 Theſ. ii. 13. 14. So that, unleſs I be condemned for ſaying, that kirk-ſeſſions and pariſhes are not the ſame thing with the firſt Chriſtian preſbyteries and congregations, the only thing that remains to be conſidered, as a ground for the ſentence againſt me upon this head, is, That I affirm theſe firſt churches were not ſubjected in their diſcipline to any juriſdiction under heaven. But as the Confeſſion and *Formula* (which reſpects pariſhes) does not preciſely decide this queſtion, nor contain any propoſition that expreſsly contradicts this; ſo there is no evidence appearing to me from the word of God, that theſe firſt churches were ſubject to any juriſdiction under heaven in their diſcipline, but much to the contrary. For,

1. Our Lord lodges the power of binding and looſing under himſelf, in that church, with its preſbytery, unto which the

the offended brother tells his brother's treſpaſs, after he has neglected to hear him with the one or two more, and he promiſes his preſence with the ſmalleſt preſbytery of ſuch a church in the exerciſe of that diſcipline; and that what they do in his name on the earth ſhall be ratified in heaven, Matth. xviii. 15.—20.

When the Lord warrants the ſmalleſt preſbytery of ſuch a church to exerciſe that diſcipline in the church, I cannot ſee, that he hereby allows any number of biſhops or preſbyters, gathered together in any other manner, to bind or looſe in his name. Neither can I ſee, that his directing his diſciples in the church to carry toward them that do not hear the church, as the Jews did towards heathen men and publicans, can give any ground to think, that he would by this have his churches to be conſtituted after the form of the Jewiſh national church. But if there had been any reference in this place unto the conſtitution of the Jewiſh church, then I conceive, that a congregational church, with its preſbytery, where the worſhip and the diſcipline hold pace together, is far more agreeable to the conſtitution of that church, which was one worſhipping congregation, with its preſbytery, the Sanhedrim, and where the bounds for the worſhip and government were the ſame, and not as in national churches now, where the worſhip is comprehended in a pariſh, and the government and diſcipline extends to the whole nation. And as there were ſynagogues in the Jewiſh congregation, where the whole worſhip of the church could not be performed; ſo there may be meetings belonging unto a congregational church, wherein ſome parts of worſhip, and ſome things pertaining to the diſcipline may be done. But as the commiſſion will not allow of a conformity to the Jewiſh church in the ſubordination of church-officers, ſo as little can I ſee any reaſon for a conformity to that church in a ſubordination of church-courts; and it will not be eaſy to prove, that theſe two ſubordinations ſhould not go together.

2. As our Lord has thus committed the whole power of diſcipline under himſelf to a congregational church with its preſbytery, and left it free from any other juriſdiction; ſo, when the apoſtles had erected ſuch churches, with their preſbyteries, and were leaving them, they did not recommend them to the care of any ſuperior court or ſynod, "but to the "Lord, on whom they believed, and to the word of his grace;" and this even when they were forewarning them of the caſe of falſe teachers, groſs errors, and ſects, the very caſe for which

which ſynods have been, by the wiſdom of man, judged abſolutely neceſſary, Acts xiv. 23. Acts xx. 17. 28.—32. The apoſtle directs unto means to be uſed in this caſe under the Lord, and calls the preſbytery to take heed to themſelves, and to all the flock; but ſpeaks of no ſuch means as a ſuperior court over ſuch a preſbytery.

There were diviſions and many evils prevailing, and groſs errors held in ſome of the firſt churches, as in the church at Corinth, and ſome of the churches in Aſia; and theſe churches are condemned for ſuffering ſuch things, and commanded to reform themſelves, which they could not well do, if it belonged to their ſuperiors; but there is no inſinuation of their ſubjection in this matter unto any ſuperior court under heaven, having juriſdiction over them, nor any reference unto ſuch juriſdiction.

3. The greateſt acts of church government and diſcipline, and the moſt important deciſions in doctrine that the New Teſtament ſpeaks of, were in congregational churches, and in no other courts; as may appear from the following inſtances.

1*ſt*, Excommunication and abſolution was in the power of the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. v. 2 Cor. ii. And to any that will impartially conſider 1 Cor. xi. 18. 20. and xiv. 23. it will evidently appear to have been a congregational church. The Apoſtle indeed ſpeaks of his delivering ſome unto Satan, 1 Tim. i. 20. but it is not thereby clear, that he did it by himſelf alone, and not after the manner pointed at 1 Cor. v. 4. 5. even as it does not appear from his ſaying, the gift was given unto Timothy by the putting on of his hands, 2 Tim. i. 6. that this was not done in the preſbytery of a church, as we ſee it was, 1 Tim. iv. 14. The trying and judging of falſe apoſtles was a great buſineſs, and this was done by the elders with the flock at Epheſus, Rev. ii. 2. Compare Acts xx. 28. and that whole flock did, in the days of Ignatius, all partake of the Lord's ſupper, and pray together in one place.

2*dly*, The firſt inſtance of ordination is in the church at Jeruſalem, when it was manifeſtly but one congregation, Acts i. and that congregation was very far from comprehending all the diſciples of Chriſt then on the earth. For it is clear from 1 Cor. xv. 6. that the Lord, after his reſurrection, was ſeen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remained when Paul wrote that epiſtle. But the number of the names together was only about one hundred and twenty, when Peter ſtood up among them, and called

called them to proceed to the ordination of an apoſtle, in the room of Judas, who was alſo, together with the eleven, to be choſen unto the overſight of that church, Acts i. 14. 15. 20. 26. For though the apoſtles had an immediate commiſſion to be witneſſes of the Lord's reſurrection, as had alſo Matthias by lot, yet it behoved them to be the overſeers or biſhops of that church, by the ſuffrages of the church. And whatever power they had to preach the goſpel through the world, yet, in order thereto, they firſt aſſembled themſelves with the church, that the goſpel might proceed out of a church; even as we ſee Paul, the great apoſtle of the Gentiles, aſſembled himſelf with the church in Antioch, and from thence went forth into the Gentile world to fulfill his commiſſion. The ſeparation of Paul and Barnabas unto that great work to which the Holy Ghoſt called them, and the ſending of them to it, was by the preſbytery of the church in Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3.: and it is manifeſt from Acts xi. 23. 26. and xiv. 25. 26. and xv. 30. that this church was but one congregation. The ordination of Timothy was by the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery, (1 Tim. iv. 14.) of ſome one or other of thoſe churches of which we read, Acts xiv. 23. compare Acts xvi. 1. 2. 3. and theſe are acknowledged to be congregational; yea, the conſtant ſignification of the word *preſbytery* in the writings of the ancients, is, for what I can learn, the elderſhip of one worſhipping congregation. And if theſe great ordinations were tranſacted in the congregations of the ſaints, we need not go elſewhere to find the power of ordaining biſhops or elders, Acts xiv. 23. and deacons, Acts vi.

3*dly*, That great deciſion in doctrine, even the δογματα, the decrees about the keeping of Moſes's law by the Gentiles, Acts xv. was ordained by the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem, in the preſence and with the conſent of that whole church, Acts xvi. 4. and xv. 26. and by none other. For,

(1.) Theſe decrees were ordained by the apoſtles, and theſe elders with the brethren that were in Jeruſalem, before the queſtion and diſpute was raiſed at Antioch; even that company that ſays, "We have heard, that certain which went "out from us have troubled you with words," ℣ 23. 24.

(2.) As there is no evidence that there were elders or meſſengers there from any other church but Antioch; ſo the company that made the deciſion is evidently diſtinguiſhed from the meſſengers of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas. So that

it is manifeſt they were not members of that court that made the deciſion, ℣ 22.—25. "Then pleaſed it the apoſtles and "elders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen men of their "own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas," &c.; and it does not appear, that Paul and Barnabas acted otherwiſe in that meeting, but as meſſengers aſking a queſtion in the name of the church that ſent them, and giving information, ℣ 2. 4. 12.

(3) We are plainly told, the deciſion was made by the apoſtles and elders of Jeruſalem, and that they decided this queſtion in the preſence and with the conſent of the whole church in Jeruſalem, to which they were elders, Acts xvi. 4. and xv. 22. For by *the whole church*, I can underſtand nothing elſe but the body of the people, the flock over which theſe elders were overſeers; not a church-repreſentative, as it is called, for that is elders. But this church is diſtinguiſhed from the elders, and is no other but that multitude of which James, in the preſence of all the elders, ſpake to Paul, when he came upon another errand afterwards to Jeruſalem, Acts xxi. 18. 19. 22. 25. This is the ſame thing that goes under the deſignation of *brethren*, Acts xv. 23. where all the members of the churches of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, are the ſame way deſigned and diſtinguiſhed from the brethren in Jeruſalem, that conſented to the deciſion, by their being of the Gentiles. This deſignation appears to have been from the beginning common to all church-members, Acts i. 14. 15. 16. 1 Theſſ. v. 12. for the churches conſiſted then of none other but ſuch as were fit to be thus deſigned; and the apoſtles reckoned all church-members their brethren in Chriſt.

There were very good reaſons for the making of this deciſion in this church, and for the ſending of this queſtion by the church in Antioch to be determined here. As,

(1.) The falſe teachers uſed the authority of the apoſtles and elders of this church, from whence they came out, againſt Paul and Barnabas, ℣ 1. 2. 24. 25. 26. and it was the uſe of ſuch teachers after this to call the apoſtleſhip of Paul in queſtion, and repreſent him unto the churches where they came, as differing from the apoſtles.

(2.) The word of God came out (1 Cor. xiv. 36.) from this church to Antioch, and to all the world; and from hence they had their church-order, and all the ordinances of Chriſt, Acts xi.; for this was peculiar to Jeruſalem, that there the goſpel ſhould have its beginning. And it could not but

trouble

trouble and burden the church at Antioch and all the Gentiles exceedingly, to think that this church ſhould be ſo far offended with them, as not to account them in a ſtate of ſalvation, ℣ 1. 24. 28.

(3.) The apoſtles were in this church, and with the elders of this church, where they began their miniſtry, and ſettled all matters of importance. And this was an important point to be fixed in this church, while they were in it. Therefore we ſee the church at Antioch had a ſpecial eye to the apoſtles their being in the preſbytery of Jeruſalem, when they ſent up this queſtion to be determined there, ℣ 2.

Thus there is nothing like a pattern for a ſynod of any kind in the 15th chapter of the Acts, but a plain pattern in the churches at Jeruſalem and Antioch, the firſt of the Jews, and the firſt of the Gentiles, for congregational churches, with their preſbyteries, and for the ſort of perſons of which thoſe churches ought to be made up, and for a preſbytery's doing things, not by numbered votes, but by agreement, and for the conſent of the whole church where they rule, unto their deciſions, and for ſuch churches their mutually helping one another, and all the diſciples of Chriſt through the world, as they have occaſion; all which is freely acknowledged by me.

4. It is not agreeable to the nature of ſuch Chriſtian churches as were from the beginning, that they ſhould be ſubject to any juriſdiction but that of the Lord Chriſt their head, or that they ſhould not depend immediately upon himſelf. For, *1ſt*, It is neceſſary unto that pure communion in brotherly love, eſpecially in the Lord's ſupper, which ought to be in them, that they have it wholly in their power, under Chriſt, to bind and looſe; and their communion in this love cannot ſtand with their being over-ruled in this matter by a ſuperior court, looſing whom they judge Chriſt commands them to bind, and binding ſuch as they judge he commands them to looſe, and receive in his name. *2dly*, Neither is it conſiſtent with their free choice of their overſeers and teachers, and their maintaining of them at their own charges, as the word of God directs, that the making up and diſſolving of the relation betwixt them and any of theſe overſeers, ſhould not be in their power under Chriſt. *3dly*, Every one of theſe churches is a complete church, repreſenting and ſhewing forth the catholic inviſible body of Chriſt, 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. And it is not agreeable unto this, that they ſhould be ſubjected to one another, or to any juriſdiction,

but that of Chriſt, who is the head of the catholic body, whoſe power is manifeſted in their diſcipline, and who is the alone head of every one of them, walking in the midſt of the golden candleſticks, and holding the ſtars in his right hand, and in whom every church of the ſaints is viſibly builded together, as the catholic church is inviſibly, "for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 21. 22.

Laſtly, Synods took their riſe from that firſt ſtep of defection from the primitive inſtitution, *viz.* the ſetting of one biſhop in a church above the reſt of the preſbytery, and making them dependent on him; ſo that they were no more his peers, and could not be his judges. This corruption was very early, and came to paſs through negligence of that direction which the Apoſtle gave againſt antichriſt, 2 Theſſ. ii. 15. "Therefore, brethren, ſtand faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epiſtle." And this direction he gave, after he had ſaid before, that the myſtery of iniquity was already working. Yet this ſtep of defection was not taken when Clemens Rom. wrote his epiſtle to the church at Corinth; though, indeed, he inſinuates ſomething of a contention about the name of the epiſcopal office, in the foreknowledge of which, he ſays, the apoſtles of Chriſt conſtituted biſhops and deacons; and he ſpeaks of no more diſtinction betwixt biſhops and preſbyters than the ſcripture does, p. 54. 55. 57. However, by this ſetting up of a new kind of biſhops, and, in conſequence of that, ſynods, the way was paved for that notable change that happened, when he who at firſt letted was taken out of the way, and when the Emperor became Chriſtian, and for that uniformity which was the throne of the beaſt, the ſeat of tyranny over the conſciences of men, and the fountain of perſecution, and of ſhedding the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of Jeſus, that kept the commandments of God, and the teſtimony of Chriſt, under the notion of hereties and ſchiſmatics.

II. As touching the magiſtrate's power in the kingdom of Chriſt, I have declared in what ſenſe I refuſe to ſubſcribe the Confeſſion on that head; and I have not yet been told, if that ſenſe wherein I underſtand it, and refuſed to ſubſcribe it, be now the ſenſe of this national church.

I have been very far from denying the magiſtrate's power in any civil ſociety, yea or in any national church; nor do I in the leaſt queſtion his right of judging in all matters of wrong and wicked lewdneſs, and even in all things pertaining

ing to national churches, as by law eſtabliſhed. For wherever he grants civil rights, or inflicts penalties, there he muſt judge, and there is the exereiſe of his power.

I have not denied the defence of the natural and civil rights of men in the kingdoms of this world, while I declare that Chriſt's kingdom is not of this world, and therefore admits not of a worldly defence. And when I affirm, that the natural and civil rights of mankind are to be defended in the kingdoms of this world, I reckon that the liberty of mens conſciences is one of thoſe rights; and cannot ſee ground for the magiſtrate's puniſhing heretics and ſchiſmatics as ſuch.

But becauſe this head is not ſo much inſiſted on, and the commiſſion does not ſeem to make ſo much of it as of the foregoing, I ſhall not now take up time with it.

III. So I proceed to the third head, the contumacy. And here I have been ſurpriſed at ſome ſignifying, that the other grounds are not of ſuch moment as to bear the weight of the cenſure, but this is; and though they would not depoſe men for congregational principles, yet they would for the contumacy. Yet,

1. There is nothing in that which is called *contumacy* but what is influenced by theſe principles; and it muſt be owned, that if congregational principles do not deſerve ſuch a cenſure, he that holds them, and walks up to them, is leſs cenſurable, than he that believes them, and does not practiſe them.

2. If the grounds of forbidding me to preach were not ſufficient, how is it poſſible, that a ſentence upon theſe grounds could looſe me from the obligation laid upon me to preach by the law of Chriſt? And can it be a ground for my depoſition, that I ſhewed a greater regard to his command, than to an ill-founded ſentence of ſuſpenſion?

3. If it be the mind of the commiſſion, that the ſentence of a ſynod, though ill founded, looſes the obligation upon a miniſter to exerciſe his miniſtry, and that he is to give obedience to it without aſking queſtions, and if he do not, muſt loſe his miniſtry; then this muſt be told me, and ſupported with ſome reaſon from the word of God, and the Confeſſion of Faith; but if not, then, of neceſſity, the grounds of the ſuſpenſion were good, elſe there is no evil in the contumacy: for it cannot be called evil to diſobey a command obliging me to ſin againſt the laws of Chriſt.

Thus

Thus I have laid before my judges a plain account of my principles, and of the ſtate of my caſe as it now ſtands; and ſo I leave it with their conſciences, as I commit it unto him who is head over all things to his church, and knows well how to order it for his own glory, and the ſalvation of his church, and is able to keep all that is committed to him againſt that day.

JOHN GLAS.

Some

Some Obſervations upon the *Original Conſtitution of the Chriſtian Church.*

In a letter to the author of the book bearing that title.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1730.]

Stand ye in the ways, and ſee, and aſk for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls: but they ſaid, We will not walk therein, Jer. vi. 16.

Set thee up way-marks, make thee high heaps: ſet thine heart toward the high-way, even the way which thou wenteſt: turn again, O virgin of Iſrael, turn again to theſe thy cities. Jer. xxxi. 21.

SIR,

I Have ſeen your performance, wherein I find you take ſome notice of the explication of my propoſition. And it being now more than a year ſince the principles maintained in that explication were ſome way impugned in the defence of national churches, and further defended in my anſwer, which ſtands to this day without any return, I expected that ſome notice would have been taken by you of what I offer in that anſwer; as alſo of my ſpeech before the commiſſion, publiſhed ſome months before your book; eſpecially conſidering your objections are moſtly obviated in theſe papers of mine: but ſeeing you have not meddled with them, perhaps becauſe you have not ſeen them, I deſire you will do me the juſtice to conſider them; and when you have offered ſomething in the confutation of them, I ſhall either receive light, or know how to defend my principles, without being put to the trouble of anſwering objections that ſtand ſufficiently anſwered already, and muſt be held as anſwered, till ſuch time as you, or ſome other, ſhew the inſufficiency of the anſwers.

In

In the mean time I preſume to offer you ſome obſervations of mine upon your performance. As,

OBSERVATION I.

I find you ſtill upon the old tract of the contenders for claſſical preſbytery againſt the Independents: and as I always thought, they diſcovered another ſpirit in this diſpute, than in ſome other controverſies wherein they have been engaged; ſo they have caſt you a copy in ſeveral things, wherein I humbly judge it was not your duty to follow them. As,

1. It was always their way, to fly to human authority when they came to the pinch, in a queſtion which is only to be decided by the word of God, and to boaſt exceedingly in that authority, and almoſt anathematiſe thoſe who take upon them to differ from ſo many, ſo learned, ſo godly men, for pretending to be ſtraitened where they were not ſtraitened, and to ſee what they could not ſee. You follow them exactly in this; and ſo do you likewiſe in having recourſe to commentators, when you cannot otherwiſe inſtruct your ſenſe of a text; as if the ſenſe of ſcripture were to be found out by plurality of voices among thoſe commentators. Yea, I find you ſometimes fain to uſe the authority of Dr Owen. But if his authority be a good argument in ſome caſes, why not in others alſo? and if his authority be not a ſufficient argument to convince yourſelf, why do you bring it to convince me?

2. It has been the way of theſe writers, to tell ſtories of the diviſions among the Independents, and of the things that befel apoſtates from the congregational way, and of the ſectaries, and charge them all upon congregational principles as the cauſe; and herein they alſo copied after the Papiſts. But though this way of doing might paſs near an hundred years ago; yet the ſtories of theſe vile writers, Edwards and Baſtwick, come up again now with vaſt diſadvantage, after they have been confuted, for ſo long a tract of time, by the congregational churches in England, ſtanding monuments of the falſehood of their charges, and of the vanity of their lying prophecies. Their vile ſtories and calumnies put me in mind of the methods wherein Chriſtianity was oppoſed, when it came abroad in the world: and your innuendo about ſilly women, when you would apply the Apoſtle's prophecy, that was evidently fulfilled in the Popiſh church, unto Independents, is very like what the Heathens ſaid ſometimes againſt Chriſtians,

ſtians, who, they alledged, "gathered a company of the very "dregs and refuſe of the people, and ſilly credulous women, "who, by the weakneſs of their ſex, are eaſily impoſed up-"on, and combined into a wicked confederacy."

3. There was never a greater application of metaphyſics unto ſcripture texts, to darken and perplex them, than that which has been made by the writers for claſſical preſbytery againſt the Independents; and you would ape them in this alſo. I muſt ſay, you do it in a very diverting manner on 1 Cor. xiv, 23. 24. "If therefore the whole church be come "together into one place," *&c.* when you tell, this muſt be underſtood in a diſtributive ſenſe; and that their propheſying, and one coming in that believed not, is to be taken for their doing this in their diſtinct congregational meetings. Men of a very metaphyſical genius have been engaged in this controverſy; and, as I ſee by your book, that you learned ſome ſchool-terms; ſo your reaſonings upon the words *if* and *all*, in that text, upon which you make this exquiſite diſtinction, do convince me, that, if you had but a little more acceſs to converſe in a certain learned place, you might be inrolled among the writers for claſſical preſbytery againſt Independents. I muſt alſo ſay this for you, that you know where to uſe your diſtinctions; for where you imagine any ſhadow of ſcripture for you, there muſt be no diſtinction.

4. You likewiſe follow the example of theſe writers, in the intolerable confidence which they expreſs in an argument, they ſometimes uſe, when ſcripture fails them, *viz.* That it would be an imputation too injurious on Chriſt and his apoſtles, to ſuppoſe, that they ordered otherwiſe than according to the Preſbyterian ſcheme. Theſe writers, and you after them, put on an air of infallibility, and thereupon freely uſe all manner of reflections on the Independents, while, at the ſame time, you take the leaſt inſinuation of a reflection from an Independent, as a thing altogether intolerable. You injure not an Independent, when you tell him, as confidently as the Pope can tell Proteſtants, that he is in a dangerous error and a deluſion; that he is void of ſenſe and candor; that he is a child, or a Jeſuite, a fool, or a rogue; But if an Independent ſhould be ſo bold as to deſire more ſenſe, or more candor in your arguings, or affirm with confidence, that he is in the right, and you in the wrong; then, as if you were the only men that had right to judge, not only for yourſelves, but for all others, you pronounce the Independent too arrogant, too uncharitable, and what not. You may ſay what

you pleaſe, without proof, make conjectures, lay down ſuppoſitions, and explain ſcriptures by them, and make what inferences you will from ſcriptures, and the Independent muſt receive all for undoubted truth; but he muſt not open his lips without the ſtricteſt demonſtration.

I know that no diſpute of this kind can be carried on by fallible men, and ſubject to paſſions, without manifold diſcoveries of human frailty, which each of the parties in their turn will not fail to ſpy out very narrowly, and aggravate to the utmoſt, while they overlook what is amiſs about themſelves, or put the beſt conſtruction upon it; but ſeeing we are liable to miſtakes, and wrong biaſſes, an air of infallibility and contempt of the underſtandings of them that differ from us, as to the ſtrength of our inferences, upon ſuch a queſtion as this is, very ill becomes us, at leaſt it ill becomes Proteſtants. And if it were given to you and me "to lay "aſide all malice, and all guile, and all hypocriſies and en"vies, and all evil ſpeakings; and as new born babes to de"ſire the ſincere milk of the word, not following a multitude "to do evil," nor "leaning to our own underſtanding, but "truſting in the Lord with all our heart," and giving up ourſelves as weaned children to the conduct of his word, I am perſuaded we would either ſoon come to be of one mind in this matter, or "forbear one another in love."

OBSERVATION II.

Your book has confirmed me in an opinion that I have for ſome time entertained. I was of opinion, that it is not meet to manage the cauſe of claſſical and national preſbytery againſt the Epiſcopalians and Independents both in one and the ſame book. And when I ſay I am confirmed in this by reading your books, I intend no reflection on your ability for diſpute: for, I am perſuaded, the ableſt defender of preſbytery on earth would find himſelf hard put to it in a conflict with both theſe adverſaries at once; even as a Prelatiſt would be in a wretched condition in an engagement with Papiſts and Anti prelatiſts at the ſame time. It is far the wiſer courſe to have one of theſe parties for a ſecond, when you would fight with the other. And I am not ſurpriſed at your apology for your temper, which is owing to your ſituation betwixt two ſuch miſerable comforters. The Epiſcopalian was able to give you ſome comfort againſt the Independent, by his unity and order and catholic uniformity; for which he is obliged to his friend the

the Papiſt; and the Independent could afford you ſome comfort againſt the Epiſcopalian, by that very thing which you reckon his grand miſtake; and when the Epiſcopalian vexed you with the antiquity of that ſaying, "One biſhop and one "church," the Independent could have comforted you againſt him exceedingly, with that ancient word of his, "One "church and one altar." But then it might be inquired, what becomes of claſſical preſbytery? and I confeſs that is indeed the queſtion. But I am ſure the greateſt Preſbyterian writers againſt Epiſcopacy have comforted themſelves much with this independent cordial: and what Preſbyterian writer is it, that has not taken ſome comfort this way againſt the Epiſcopalians, eſpecially on the ſtate of things in the three firſt centuries? You yourſelf, that complain of both theſe comforters, are yet obliged to take ſome comfort from them; and while you are warmly engaged with one of them, you are glad to have ſome reſpite from the other. If I be miſtaken in this, you will correct me; but I will give you ſome inſtances. As,

1. When you write againſt the Epiſcopalians, you ſhew a warm zeal for the word of God, and the pattern expreſsly laid down there, in oppoſition to what crept in afterward, with the faireſt ſhew of wiſdom. But when you write againſt the Independents, you are for ſome things that your wiſdom judges moſt neceſſary unto decency and order, that do not appear in the firſt formation of churches by the apoſtles; and theſe are ſuch things as eccleſiaſtic courts meeting in the name and authority of Jeſus Chriſt. And it is your judgment, that the rulers of the churches are authoriſed to determine the number of judicatures in any kingdom where Chriſtianity is univerſally profeſſed, when they are to be divided or ſub-divided, according to the different circumſtances of churches and places; and this by virtue of the apoſtolical direction, "That all things ſhould be done decently and in or-"der," or according as they find the exigencies and edification of the whole body may be beſt advanced. Thus, while you will not ſuffer the Epiſcopalians, for decency and order, to ſet one church officer over a preſbytery and dioceſe, for the edification of the whole, you yourſelf, for decency and order, eſtabliſh three church courts, for which you have as little ſcripture warrant as he has for his officer, even kirk ſeſſions, provincial and national ſynods, p. 213. 258. 259. 260. And the thing you drive at in this, even the adapting of the government of the church to the conſtitutions of the king-

doms of this world, and making it a part of their conſtitution, and the kingdom of Chriſt in this world of the very ſame dimenſions with them, is a thing at leaſt as inconſiſtent with plain clear ſcripture, and the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, as ever you will prove a biſhop in a preſbytery to be; and a thing you have as little commiſſion for from Jeſus Chriſt as for making a Pope, which was alſo done by man's wiſdom, for decency, and order and edification. And whereas you ſay of your courts, there is no ſubſtantial or ſpecific difference between a preſbytery and provincial ſynod, *&c.* the nature of their power being materially the ſame; only the latter is more extenſive and numerous than the former, the firſt being made up of the rulers of ſeveral congregations, and the latter of theſe of ſeveral particular churches; on which account their authority muſt be proportionally the greater and more extenſive; and thus a national or œconomical aſſembly are no more ſpecifically diſtinct from one another, or from a ſynod, than a provincial ſynod is from a preſbytery: May not the ſame apology be made for the ſubordination of their officers till it come to the univerſal biſhop, the ſervant of the ſervants of God; ſeeing the higher courts rule the inferior, and the Chriſtians under their charge as effectually as the higher officers rule them that are inferior, and their authority is proportionally the greater and more extenſive, till it come to the higheſt officer, even as the authority of the courts you ſay is greater and more extenſive till it come to the higheſt court?

2. When you write againſt the Independents, you are confident there is no inſtance or example of a congregational preſbytery in the new Teſtament: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you doubt not to ſay, that moſt of the churches through the Chriſtian world were only congregational during the ſecond and third centuries; and even with reſpect to the greater churches, you would have them to be ſerved with one altar, as it is called, p. 534. 535. 536.; which, I acknowledge, anſwers beſt unto the proper ſcriptural notion of a church, both under the Old Teſtament and the New.

3. In ſtating the queſtion with the Independents about a congregation, you always make it an aſſembly hearing and capable to be edified by one paſtor preaching at a time: but againſt the Epiſcopalians, you would ſet it on another footing, and have recourſe to the Lord's ſupper, and the whole body partaking of one altar, as it is called, diſtinct from the Catechumens, p. 534. 535. So, againſt the Independents,

pendents, you make Perth and Dundee, and the like, to be two congregations; and againſt the Epiſcopalians you make them but one.

4. Againſt the Independents you gather together all theſe converted by the miniſtry of the apoſtles in Jeruſalem, and all theſe converted by Paul's miniſtry in Epheſus, where he continued by the ſpace of two years, ſo that all they which dwelt in Aſia heard the word of the Lord Jeſus; and this to make the number of Chriſtians both in Jeruſalem and Epheſus to be ſo great, that there behoved to be many congregations in each of them: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you expreſsly ſay, "The church in the ſingular number, ſo far as I can "obſerve, is no where in the New Teſtament made uſe of "in expreſs terms to denote any more than the Chriſtians in "ſome city, except when the catholic church is meant. "This I have formerly obſerved, and ſo there is no ſolid "foundation in ſcripture of any difference between a church "and the Chriſtians of ſuch a city; which is a clear evi- "dence, that the elders ſent for to Miletus were only theſe "of Epheſus; for there is not the ſmalleſt ground for taking "it in a diſtributive ſenſe, p. 425." And yet all that were converted by Paul's miniſtry while at Epheſus muſt be brought in to dwell in the city, to eſtabliſh a diſtributive ſenſe of theſe words to the elders, "Feed the flock."

5. You are very angry with the Independents for the difference they make between the key of doctrine and diſcipline upon the 15th chapter of the Acts; and think it implies a contradiction to ſuppoſe, that that meeting which you call a ſynod had power to give forth laws, and yet not to cenſure the contraveners, p. 347. And yet, againſt the Epiſcopalians, you make ſuch a difference between the exerciſe of the key of doctrine and that of diſcipline, as ſuppoſes a power of giving forth the laws of Jeſus Chriſt, and yet not of cenſuring the contraveners. For you allow that one paſtor may give forth the laws of Chriſt doctrinally; but you will not allow him by himſelf to exerciſe the power of juriſdiction and government, or to exerciſe the key of diſcipline, p. 603. You will not hinder a ſingle paſtor or a ſingle church to give forth the laws of Chriſt to all Chriſtians and all churches in the world, in a way of doctrine, and to command obedience in the name of Chriſt; but you will not allow one paſtor, or one church either, to exerciſe diſcipline, or to cenſure all other paſtors and churches for contravening all theſe laws of Chriſt,

Chriſt, that they publiſh and declare in his name and authority.

6. Againſt the Independents you make much uſe of the Jewiſh church, which you would fain have to be the ſame thing eſſentially with the Chriſtian; and you contend ſtrongly upon the ſubordination of the ſynagogues unto ſuperior courts: but againſt the Epiſcopalians you affirm, the Chriſtian church was not erected till the reſurrection of Chriſt; and you are glad to have it granted by any of them, that the Chriſtian churches were formed according to the ſynagogues, and that the Chriſtian church had its model from them, and by no means from the temple. And yet you will deny, that the church in Jeruſalem was like a ſynagogue, or formed after the model of it. But poſſibly you may tell me next of a ſynagogue claſſical.

I might here call upon you to adjuſt your own principles, and reconcile yourſelf handſomely, as a contender againſt Independency, to yourſelf as a contender againſt Epiſcopacy, before you make ſuch bold and impudent charges againſt ſuch as deſire to make the laws of Chriſt the rule and meaſure of their faith and practice, as you complain of in the Epiſcopalians againſt your faction; but if you ſtill perſiſt, then know what you yourſelf ſay to the Epiſcopalians, Append. p. 37. at the cloſe.

OBSERVATION III.

Your critical obſervations on the ſcripture, and on the explication of my propoſition, give me ſome ground to ſuſpect, there is no great reaſon for the complaint inſinuated in your preface in theſe words: "I am but an obſcure country mini-"ſter." I own, an obſcure country miniſter has little uſe for nice criticiſm; and, if his pariſh be very large, he may be more ſuitably employed than in that art, which is moſt proper for doctors of divinity. But though you had time, as you have not in your preſent ſituation, I muſt acknowledge the ſample you have given of your talent this way does not evidently declare that you deſerve the doctor's chair. No man needs ſuſpect me of a deſign to ſhew my talent in criticiſm, in order to preferment in the national church; neither can I pretend to be a critic: but you will not, I hope, reckon it preſumption in me, to put you in mind of ſome things that look very odd to me, and that I cannot eaſily underſtand, till either you, having more time, or ſome friend of yours of greater

greater genius and leiſure, clear them up to me; and if, after all, I remain in the dark, there is no help for that.

1. The firſt thing I take notice of, is what you ſay, *p.* 90. "I deſire," ſay you, "our author may aſſign us, what place "of the New Teſtament it is, that calls any ſingle church, "the church at Antioch, at Corinth, at Epheſus, *&c.* He "that pretends to a ſuperlative regard to ſcripture-ſtyle ought "ſtrictly to regard it himſelf. We have frequent mention "of the church of Epheſus, *&c.* but no where at Epheſus, "*&c.*; but this was not without deſign." Here you, that ſometimes condemn me for thinking evil, appear to me as he that trampled on Plato's pride. But I confeſs I am to this hour at a loſs to know what could be my deſign in ſaying *at*, where you would have me to ſay *of*; and I could be ſatisfied to ſee a little more of your critical ſkill upon *at* and *of*. I ſee in my Engliſh Bible, the church at Jeruſalem, Acts viii. 1. the church at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Cor. i. 1. which, no doubt, has led me into that way of ſpeaking at which you take umbrage. Your good liking to *of* inſtead of *at*, has put me to look for it; and ſo I find the church of the Theſſalonians, 1 Theſſ. i. 1. 2 Theſſ. i. 1. the church of the Laodiceans, Col. iv. 16. I dare not ſay of Theſſalonica, or of Laodicea, leſt I be checked by you for altering the expreſſion of deſign. But I may ſay of Epheſus: for I once read it, and, if I remember right, but once, Rev. ii. 1. And if a way of ſpeaking be to be eſtabliſhed in the method of plurality, *at* muſt carry it, for it has many againſt one, and but one. If we go to the firſt language with this nice obſervation of your's, there, I fear, we ſhall neither find *of Epheſus*, nor *at Epheſus*; but we muſt ſpeak after this manner, *the Epheſian church*. And if we ſpeak about Epheſus, as other churches are ſpoke of, we muſt ſay, "the church of the Epheſians; the church in "Epheſus;" and this laſt is the common way of ſpeaking in the New Teſtament: for, if I may preſume to tranſlate, I find, "the church in Jeruſalem, in Antioch, in Corinth," *&c.*

2. Next, I find you would puzzle me with a hard queſtion upon that famous phraſe ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, which you find, after the Preſbyterian writers have pointed it out to you, Acts iv. 25. 26. and I, it ſeems, did not ſet it down when I noted down other texts: but I aſſure you, if it had been in my eye, I had ſet it down, as making for the ſenſe of that phraſe which I contend for. Your queſtion is, Is it to be learned from any part of the ſacred oracles, that Herod, Pontius Pilate, and

and the kings of the earth, with the rulers, aſſembled together in one place, againſt the Lord and his Chriſt? This queſtion had been more exact, though perhaps not ſo pungent, if you had kept cloſe by the words of the text; and I ſhall not ſay it was of deſign, that you did not keep by them. If you had ſeen my anſwer to the "Defence of national churches," a part of the ſacred oracles had caſt up to you, where you would have found the kings of the earth, even Herod and Pontius Pilate, ſtanding up, and the rulers, even the rulers of the Jews, gathered επι το αυτο, *in one place*, againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt; and that is Luke xxiii. from the 1ſt to the 15th verſe. You muſt take notice, that ℣ 26. of Acts iv. ſays only, "The rulers were gathered" επι το αυτο; and this is the ſenſe of the Hebrew adverb VAHAD, which ſignifies *in one*, as the Greek words properly ſignify, *in the ſame*. And if the conſtant ſenſe of the Greek phraſe in the New Teſtament be, *in one* or *the ſame* place, and be found in that ſignification here, then this is the ſenſe of the Hebrew word, as it ſtands in Pſalm ii. 2. And whatever other uſes it may be otherwiſe put to, yet there it muſt ſignify *one place*. And in that text, as well as in Acts iv. 26. it is only aſcribed to the rulers, as ſtanding up is unto the kings. I need not tell you, that ℣ 27. chap. iv. of the Acts, is an explication of ℣ 25. and 26. of that chapter. I would have you alſo to notice, that in ℣ 27. there is a different reading, which is to be found in the Syriac, vulgate Latin, and Beza's Latin verſions, according to ſeveral Greek manuſcripts; and I have it in Bleau's Greek Teſtament, where, after αληθειας, you may read εν τη πολει ταυτη. I am far from inſiſting on this different reading; only, if it has crept into ſome copies as a gloſs, it may be from thence inferred, that, when that gloſs obtained, επι το αυτο was underſtood to ſignify *in one place*. But whatever be in this, that we may have a diſtinct view of ℣ 27. we may conſider the words in the order wherein they ſtand in the original "For there were gathered together, of a "truth, againſt thy holy child Jeſus, whom thou haſt a-"nointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, "and (with) the people of Iſrael." Allow me now to aſk you, Does the foreſaid part of the ſacred oracles (Luke xxiii. 1.—15.) teach you, that Herod, with his men of war, was together in one place with the people of Iſrael? and does it not alſo teach you, that Pontius Pilate (and if there were any Gentiles with him) was alſo aſſembled together in one place with the people of Iſrael? Do you not find the rulers of

of the Jews aſſembled in one place both before Pilate and before Herod? And then tell me what more ſays the text on this ſubject? And further tell me, if it lie in your power, what place of the New Teſtament it is, from which you or I may learn that επι το αυτο does not carry one place always in its meaning? and I'll be obliged to you.

You do not offer to bring any text of the New Teſtament, to ſhew the leaſt miſtake in what I have ſaid of ὁμοθυμαδον; but you deny it, and deſire the authority of a diſintereſted perſon, ſkilled in the Greek language, to confirm what I ſay. Truly a diſintereſted perſon will not be eaſily found; and for ſkill in the Greek language, if you mean the knowledge of the ſenſe of that word in Greek authors, it cannot determine the queſtion, which is about the conſtant ſignification of that word in the New Teſtament. I had ſaid, this word ſeems not to be uſed in the New Teſtament, but in the caſe of more or fewer concurring perſonally in the ſame action; and I cited all the texts that occurred to me where the word is uſed: if, therefore, you can bring me no text of the New Teſtament where this word has not this import, far better yield it, than talk beſide the purpoſe. If you pleaſe to look and compare Acts ii. 1. 3. 4. 38. Acts x. 44.—47. you will find ground for another aſſertion of mine, for which you want proof.

3. I confeſs I am ſurpriſed with your criticiſm upon "they "all," Acts v. 12. You ſay, it is contrary to the natural and grammatical conſtruction of the words, to make οι παντες to be conſtructed with ὁλην την εκκλησιαν. I acknowledge I never made grammatical conſtruction much my ſtudy; but I have been put to look in what order words lie in the New Teſtament, and I think I find the like conſtruction there, Acts vi. 5. Acts viii. 1. 1 Theſſ. i. 12. 2 Theſſ. i. 1. 2. 3. Neither can I ſee any thing unnatural in a diſcourſe, where a ſociety, a multitude is ſpoken of, when I hear it ſaid, They all did ſuch a thing, or, They are all in ſuch a place; at leaſt I think this is very common. I cannot but wonder to ſee this obſervation of yours, the foundation and ſtrength of your arguing, to prove, that by *them all* that were with one accord in Solomon's porch, we muſt not underſtand the whole church, but only the apoſtles. And to help on your arguings upon this head, you would have it believed, that the text ſays, the people magnified the apoſtles on account of the miracles wrought; whereas, whatever be ſaid in the context, the text ſays only, "the people magnified *them*." And the queſtion is, What *them?* It is manifeſt, that it is *them* that

were all with one accord in Solomon's porch, and to whom no man of the reſt durſt join himſelf. But the queſtion ſtill remains, What are *they all* that are ſaid to be with one accord in Solomon's porch? and what we are to underſtand by *the reſt*? You ſay *they all* are the apoſtles, and *the reſt* are the whole church: And ſo you teach us, that the providence about Ananias made a ſeparation between the whole church and the apoſtles; which, I think, could be no advantage to the church, eſpecially when in great fear; and the apoſtles, by this means, loſt a precious opportunity of doing good to the church.

But the ſacred writer ſeems to be declaring, that the church was ſo far from being at any loſs by that dreadful providence, that it was rather the better for it; and, if I miſtake not, we are not ſo much acquainted of the fear of the preſence of the twelve, as of the fear of God, ſhewing himſelf awful in the church, that fell upon all the church, and upon others that heard theſe things. Neither is there any inſinuation, that either the church, or the reſt of the people upon whom this fear came, fled from the apoſtles, but rather the contrary. At leaſt, if the whole church fled from their preſence, the context tells us, the multitudes of other people came the nearer them. In a word, it is impoſſible to inſtruct from this paſſage, or even make it appear feaſible, that either the church, or the reſt of the people, fled from the preſence of the apoſtles on this occaſion; but it is moſt eaſy to conceive, that the reſt of the people, that were moved with the fear of God on this occaſion, durſt not lightly join the church as members, and yet magnified the church.

4. You look carefully into the book of the Acts, to find out every thing that may be any way wreſted to your purpoſe; but are not, it ſeems, ſo quick-ſighted as to pretty clear things there againſt you; and therefore, with no ſmall aſſurance, you reflect on me, for inſinuating, that there was a feaſt at Jeruſalem when Paul went up, Acts xxi.; and you ſay, it is but a begging of the queſtion, till I prove it, *p.* 241. But, ſeeing you make the queſtion to turn upon this hinge, I have ſome hopes to ſatisfy you, that I did not beg it, as you love to ſpeak, in this inſinuation, if the word of God be of any uſe to decide the queſtion: and therefore I deſire you may look chap. xx. where you find Paul on his way up to Jeruſalem at this time, and conſider ℣ 16. and likewiſe chap. xxi. ℣ 27. and ſee if the ſame thing be not as fully inſinuated in the word of God, as it was by me. Yet I cannot attribute your

your way of treating the ſcriptures, to make the myriads of which James ſpeaks to Paul, members of the church in Jeruſalem, ſo much to want of ſight and nice inſpection, as to ſome other thing. For, when you ſay, p. 188. "We find "there were great additions made to the church of Jeruſa-"lem; for it is ſaid, they had reſt, and were multiplied, "Acts ix. 31." I cannot think that you never looked at Acts ix. 31. where you ſee the churches throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, had reſt, and were multiplied; but you ſet down *they*, inſtead of *theſe* churches, and conſtruct *they* with the church of Jeruſalem, to your unwary reader; though yet, in another caſe, you could ſay, that *the church* and *they* would not conſtruct together.

Next, you find additions made to the church in Jeruſalem, by the growth and multiplication of the word of God, Acts xii. 24. as if there had been no church to receive additions by that, but the church in Jeruſalem. And then you tell us, to ſhut up all, James and the elders inform Paul, Acts xxi. 20. "Thou ſeeſt, brother, how many thouſands [or my-"riads] of Jews there are which believe." And, p. 240. & 241. you would have your reader imagine, that the myriads of believing Jews that James ſpeaks of to Paul, ℣ 20. are the ſame thing with the multitude that he ſaid would be informed of his coming to the city, and therefore would needs come together, ℣ 22; as if there had been no believing Jews, but ſuch a multitude as could eaſily hear of Paul's coming into the city, and come together upon that. I have a better conceit of your underſtanding, than to allow myſelf to think, that theſe methods ſerve to perſuade yourſelf of what you are ſaying; and the only apology I can make for you is, That you ſee honeſt Preſbyterians have uſed theſe ſcriptures in the ſame manner before you, and this gives you confidence.

5. Upon πληθος and πας το πληθος, you cite Luke viii. 37. and inquire, if I will ſay, that every individual perſon in that whole country of the Gadarenes came forth? And you likewiſe cite, Luke i. 10. and ſay, you believe it will be hard to make it appear, that all the people in Jeruſalem were without, praying, at the time Zacharias was offering incenſe. And I ſay, I cannot take upon me to affirm, that every individual member of a congregational church, man and woman, comes together at any time, when it may be ſaid the whole church comes together in one place to do any thing. Even as, when you ſay, the whole ſynod, or the whole multitude of

the general aſſembly, comes together, or agrees to do a thing, I would injure you, if I ſaid you ſpoke falſe, becauſe I found that every individual in the roll of the ſynod or aſſembly was not preſent. I referred you to Lauder upon this, and pointed you to the title of the book; and I refer you to him again. But I do not expect that my reference to him upon this will be taken to import, that I differ in no point from him. I cannot deny, that one biſhop came to have the preeminency over his brethren in the preſbytery very early, and that this was a deviation from the apoſtolical pattern; but this preſbytery and church where that biſhop was, muſt be owned to be one congregation, having one altar, as it came to be called; and this, as it is agreeable to the apoſtolical pattern, effectually deſtroys both dioceſan Epiſcopacy and claſſical Preſbytery, as far as antiquity is concerned: for, if the παν το πληθος, under the inſpection of the preſbytery, or the one biſhop that came to be ſet over them, partook of one bread and one cup, and had but one communion-table; then the churches were neither dioceſan nor claſſical, but only congregational; and if ſuch were the churches where this innovation of one biſhop over a preſbytery took place, ſuch were the apoſtolic churches.

You have a very rare obſervation upon το πληθος μαθητων, its being in the maſculine gender; for you ſay it ſeems to point forth it was an aſſembly of men, and not of women; and then you reckon, that women have no concern in the choice of officers in the church where they are: and ſuch are the obſervations that ſatisfy you, it ſeems, that the preſbyterian model of government, and form of a church, is divine, in oppoſition to the congregational.

6. I want to know how you obſerved, p. 418. That Paul planted a church at Epheſus before he met with the twelve diſciples; and what ground have you to affirm, that it was not his practice, in other cities, to go from places where there were diſciples, and leave them without paſtors, when the contrary is ſo evident from the book of the Acts, chap. xiv. and Tit. i. 5.

7. Your obſervation upon the word *brethren*, is according to a fancy of mine, when I firſt read the Bible, and underſtood by that word only the Preſbyterian miniſters, whom I heard calling one another *brethren*; but it is altogether unworthy of any man of tolerable ſenſe. You ſay, "That "*brother*, or *brethren*, is uſually applied as the characte-"riſtic of church officers, as diſtinguiſhed from the ſaints

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"or private believers of any church." And when you have noted down many texts, you go on to ſay, "And indeed our "Lord appropriates this name to his apoſtles, and thereby "expreſſes that equality of authority and power that was a-"mong them, or that one of them was not raiſed above an-"other in office, Matth. xxiii. 8." And this is what you alledge to juſtify your aſſertion, That, by *the brethren*, Acts xv. we are to underſtand perſons in office. But you muſt both alledge and prove more, before you juſtify that aſſertion: for, to make that good, you muſt prove, that the word *brethren* is the characteriſtic of church-officers, as diſtinguiſhed from other Chriſtians, and that where it is uſed in a diſtinction between elders and thoſe that are deſigned by it, as it is Acts xv. And nothing that you alledge on this head will prove your point, except it ſhall appear, that *brother*, or *brethren*, occurs not any where in the New Teſtament, but where it denotes perſons in office. And this cannot be evident till you manifeſt, that the command of brotherly love reſpects only perſons in office. But I will not be ſurpriſed, though you confine that command to perſons in office, and underſtand nothing elſe but them by the words *brother* and *brethren*, in the firſt epiſtle of John, when I conſider the account you make of the ſaints, or private believers of the churches, by whom I reckon you underſtand the members of the churches not in office. For theſe, according to you, were ſuch perſons of whom no viſible poſitive evidence of their being ſaints or believers, was or ought to be required, in order to their being church-members; and as to whom no man was to look after any poſitive evidence for a foundation of any charitable judgment concerning them, that they were believers.

Probably it may alſo be your mind, that the brethren, upon whom the brethren of your ſynod laid the burden, Acts xv. were perſons in office, as diſtinguiſhed from the private believers of the churches. But this would burden the brethren, the office-bearers only, with the yoke in ſynodical authority, and leave the church-members free; which will by no means conſiſt with your ſenſe of Matth. xxiii. 8. Though I cannot deny, but that text is perverted by you, while, without attending to the context, you would make us believe, that our Lord is only forbidding the officers to lord over one another, and not forbidding them to lord over the people, as the ſcribes and Phariſees did, nor the people to ſubject their conſciences to their authority. Further, I

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am not ſure but you would have us to underſtand only a church-officer, as diſtinguiſhed from a private believer in a church, by the word *brother*, Matth. xviii. "If thy brother "treſpaſs;" and, 1 Cor. v. "If any that is called a bro "ther:" and if this be ſo, then let the clergy only exerciſe diſcipline upon one another, they muſt not, it ſeems, bind or looſe the private believers of any church; for who gives them a power to judge "them that are without," *i. e.* them that are not called *brethren?*

It is moſt eaſy to manifeſt, that the ſaints, or private believers of a church, even all the members, as diſtinguiſhed from their elders, are called *brethren*; and no man that but glances theſe two texts, will eaſily doubt of it, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. 13. Heb. xiii. 22. You note down a great many places, which ſhew, that the apoſtles called them that were in office *brethren*; and you might alſo have noted down texts to ſhew, that the apoſtles themſelves were called *diſciples*, while they were ſent to preach. And, whatever take place now, who doubts, but thoſe that were in office were ſaints, and faithful, in the judgment of charity; and ſo brethren, as well as they that were not in office in the churches? But I am ſtill at a loſs to find the place where thoſe in office are diſtinguiſhed from private members of churches, and that by the word *brethren*. Surely I cannot find them diſtinguiſhed by a word common to them with others. And if you had well conſidered the texts you note down, you had found other deſignations added to diſtinguiſh officers from other brethren out of office; and which I would have you to notice. Theſe deſignations import ſervice, 2 Cor. viii. 23. Eph. vi. 21. Phil. ii. 25.

8. I confeſs I am aſtoniſhed at an aſſertion of yours, concerning Judas and Silas, p. 313. that they were not members of the church of Jeruſalem, but prophets at Antioch, and ſometime members of that church, and your inquiry thereupon. What power, ſay you, had the elders of Jeruſalem to miſſionate Judas and Silas, when they were not members of that church, but prophets at Antioch, unleſs they had been a part of that ſynodical meeting? For this you cite Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. which proves prophets at Antioch; but there is not a word there of Judas and Silas. Next you have Acts xv. 32. 35. and if you had conſidered the context and intervening verſes, you might have ſeen, that they belonged to Jeruſalem, and not to Antioch; unleſs you would infer, from Silas's being ſent to Antioch, and then let go, and then

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chuſing to abide at Antioch, that he was a member of that church before he came there. But this is of a piece with the reſt of the mighty inferences upon which ſynodical authority is eſtabliſhed. You infer from Judas and Silas their being prophets, that they were certainly church-officers; and, by the ſame rule, you no doubt believe, that the diſciples, Acts xxi. 4. and Philip's four daughters, ℣ 9. were church-officers; and you infer, from their being chief men or captains, as you call them, among the brethren, that the brethren among whom they were captains were church officers. You have alſo a rare criticiſm upon Acts xvi. 4. and an inference upon it, which might well have been ſpared if you had looked back to the ſecond verſe; and that would alſo have ſaved you the trouble of looking through the New Teſtament, as far down as the Revelation, for the ſupport of that fancy. But it would be endleſs to trace you in all your wild extravagancies upon Acts xv.

I ſhall conclude this obſervation with taking ſome notice of your account of the nature and import of the word ἐκκλησία, or *church*.

You affirm, it is uſed to expreſs the viſible and catholic body of Chriſt, which conſiſts of all thoſe throughout the world that profeſs the true religion, together with their children and offspring, p. 51.

When I was declaring the import of this word in the explication of the propoſition, I propoſed a queſtion; which, inſtead of anſwering directly, you are pleaſed to overlook, while you are very liberal in your uncharitable rebukes to me, for paſſing over this import of the word. The queſtion is this, *Expl. above*, p. 157. It may be a queſtion, If all the diſciples of Chriſt throughout the world be called *the church* any otherwiſe than as they appear, and in the Judgment of charity are reckoned to be of this "general aſſembly, and church "of the firſt-born?" And now, Sir, I am ready to maintain the negative in the anſwer of this queſtion, for any thing I have yet ſeen in your book, or in any Preſbyterian writer, to the contrary. Thus you have a fair theſis before you; try your metaphyſical and critical ſkill upon it; and when you ſay enough to convince me of my miſtake in this poſition, I ſhall retract it: but I will not be moved away from it by quibbles, nor will I be bullied out of it by authorities and bluſtering words.

I ſhall now conſider the texts you bring for this import of the word. And the firſt of them is, 1 Cor. i. 2. which you connect

connect with chap. xii. 28. " To the church of God which " is at Corinth, with all that in every place call upon the " name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.——And God hath ſet ſome " in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondarily prophets, thirdly " teachers." I do not find all them that in every place call on the name of the Lord, called *the church*, 1 Cor. i. 2.; but I find the ſociety in Corinth called *the church in Corinth*, and the members of it ſaid to be ſanctified, and called to be ſaints, together with all that call on the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in every place. And am I from thence to infer, that all that in every other place called on Chriſt's name are meant by the word *church* there? But perhaps the ſtreſs leans upon the connection betwixt this text and chap. xii. 28. And will you ſay, that the import of the word *church* there is the ſame with the import of it here? or though all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jeſus be not here called *the church*, yet there they go under that deſignation by virtue of the connection betwixt this text and that? This is what I reckon you intend; but may you not as well connect this verſe with the following part of the ſame chapter, and with the third chapter, and with the eleventh chapter, and ſay, that the Apoſtle is aſcribing thoſe unchriſtian ſchiſms, and thoſe diſorders about the Lord's ſupper, to all that call on the name of the Lord in every place? In the ſame manner you affirm ſtrongly, that all " the ſtrangers " ſcattered abroad," *&c.* to whom Peter directs, are called *one flock*, and all the twelve tribes to whom James directs are called *one church*, and *one aſſembly*. And thus any man may make the ſcriptures ſay any thing he thinks fit.

Look throughout 1 Cor. xii. and ſee if you can find any church there but the body myſtical, which is called *Chriſt*, and the church in Corinth, to which the Apoſtle accommodates what he ſays of the body myſtical, becauſe it was viſible, or outwardly repreſented in the church at Corinth. The body that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of there is all animated by the Spirit of the Lord Chriſt, from whom it has its denomination, by reaſon of the unſpeakable union which is by his Spirit: and will you ſay, that all thoſe whom you make members of your viſible body are made to drink into that one Spirit? and this after you have declared that their religion lies only in the breath of their lips, and that they may be altogether void of the Spirit? This is that body into which the Apoſtle ſays they all, both Jews and Gentiles, were baptized. And, after he has ſpoken of God's ſetting the members in this body,

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and tempering it together ſo as there may be no ſchiſm in it, he applies what he had ſaid home to the church at Corinth, appointed, as all particular churches are, to ſhew forth this body myſtical, as they are alſo inſtituted on all accounts for the ſake of it. It is alſo manifeſt, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the gifts of the Spirit for the edification of the body myſtical, and for the eſtabliſhing of a due profeſſion of the Lord Chriſt in the churches of the ſaints, and this for the ſake of the myſtical body. Now, let me know, were not all theſe gifts in the church at Corinth, and the apoſtolic gift firſt; for thereby the foundation of it was laid. And then, anſwer me, Did not God ſet apoſtles, prophets, *&c.* in the body myſtical? However you may quibble on this queſtion, yet, if you anſwer it affirmatively, you ſpeak good ſound ſcripture-language; and, if you pleaſe, I will direct you to a place or two that will ſupport you, Rev. xxi. 14. Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.

Your next text is Eph. iii. 10. which I read thus: "To "the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in "heavenly places, might be known by the church the ma-"nifold wiſdom of God." I cannot underſtand how it came in your head to take the import of the word *church* here to be your viſible body, diſtinct from the inviſible, and from a particular church. And till I underſtand how you make it out, I muſt remain honeſtly perſuaded, as before, that it is the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born that is intended.

Then you have 1 Cor. x. 32. "Give none offence, neither "to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of "God." I cannot tell how your argument ſhould proceed upon this place, unleſs it be by denying this propoſition, That when a man gives offence to one viſible member of the church, or one that appears to be a member of that myſtical body, he offends the whole; even as Saul perſecuted the inviſible head in heaven, in perſecuting the viſible members. But this cannot be eaſily denied. Further, I reckon, that as you imagine the Apoſtle is not in this text intending the body myſtical, ſo neither do you think he intends the church at Corinth, or any ſuch church whereof Chriſtians happen to be members. And upon ſuch ſuppoſitions ſtands your viſible body as the import of the word *church* here.

You next cite Heb. ii. 12. "I will declare thy name unto "my brethren, in the midſt of the church will I ſing praiſe "unto thee." I always took this to ſignify the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, conſiſting of Chriſt's bre-

thren, in whoſe name he glorifies the Father, and unto whom he declares his Father's name, as John xvii. 26. But ſo fond are you of that viſible catholic body which you imagine to yourſelf, that you take not leiſure to think well of the body myſtical, which is indeed the church, nor to conſider what is proper to it.

In the laſt place, you have 1 Tim. iii. 15. "That thou mayſt "know how to behave thyſelf in the houſe of God, which is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the "truth." It ſeems you are perſuaded, that neither the whole building of God, built on the foundation of the prophets and apoſtles, Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, in whom it is all fitly framed together, and growing unto an holy temple, nor the little habitation of God at Epheſus, ſhewing forth that building, Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21. 22. can be underſtood by *the church of the living God* in this text. But your own explication of Acts xx. 28. however croſs it be to the ſcope of the text, might have ſerved to make you underſtand, that the elders of the church in Epheſus were bound to feed the church; which is by no means, ſay you, to be underſtood to be the church as viſible, and can only be meant of thoſe who are truly redeemed, and is evidently the inviſible body of Chriſt, p. 158. 159. If you underſtand this well, I reckon you will not help thinking, that not only apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, but even paſtors and teachers were given to feed, *i. e.* govern the inviſible body of Chriſt.

But when men lay down a ſcheme of principles inconſiſtent with the ſcriptures, they muſt alſo, it ſeems, take inconſiſtent methods of explaining the ſcripture, to make it anſwer to all the parts of their ſcheme.

When you have cited theſe ſcriptures, you tell us, "Nay, "the children of profeſſing and Chriſtian parents are to be "reputed members of the viſible church." But I would aſk you, why are they not to be reputed members of the myſtical body, if one of the parents be to be ſo reputed? But, according to you, the profeſſion of Chriſtianity is not ſuch a thing as gives ground to repute any man that makes it a member of the body of Chriſt. And then you conclude, "From "all which it is manifeſt, that there is a catholic viſible "church in the world, to which Chriſt, by a deed of gift, "gave apoſtles, prophets, and teachers, with an external po-"lity or government." And then, in another place, p. 104. 105. you bring this as a ſtanding witneſs againſt the Independent notions, and a warrant for national and provincial churches;

churches; and you bring two other texts to prove it, Eph. iv. 4. 11. 12. and Rom. xii. 4. 10.; from which I could be content to ſee your inference, ſhewing your catholic body viſible and organiſed, as it ſtands diſtinguiſhed by you from the body myſtical, which you ſay is not organiſed, and from the congregations of the ſaints. But I will have occaſion to touch at theſe texts afterwards; only I cannot but admire your confidence, in bringing ſuch texts for your catholic body viſible, conſidering the account you elſewhere give of its conſtituent members.

You will allow me, in the concluſion of what I have been ſaying upon this import of the word *church*, to ſay, it is manifeſt, there is no ground for all your mighty confidence in the perſuaſion you have about a catholic viſible organic body, with an external government. And though you may have a general notion of all the profeſſors of the name of Chriſt on the earth, and expreſs this your notion by the word *church* as you pleaſe; yet I deſire you may ſhew me where, but in your own head, all theſe profeſſors are united viſibly together in the unity of one eccleſiaſtic government. Produce your ſtanding witneſs againſt the Independent notions; ſhew us if this witneſs be any where in the habitable world, and then we ſhall ſee how far it warrants your national and provincial churches.

In the mean time, you go about to warrant national and provincial churches from the New Teſtament: which I own is the ſame thing to us that the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts were to the firſt churches; for though they were with us, we would, in that caſe, have no more but what we have in the New Teſtament: and if you can bring me a warrant from thence for theſe churches, I will own there is a ſtanding warrant for them.

You ſay the churches of Galatia appear to have been under one eccleſiaſtical government. And how does that appear? It appears thus: "They are all written to as if one "ſingle church, under the ſtricteſt ties of unity, and oneneſs "of judgment and affections." I ſee the epiſtle directed to the churches of Galatia; and it appears that theſe churches were under the prevailing influence of falſe doctrine; this was common to them: ſo that one epiſtle ſerves them all on this ſubject. Here I find no oneneſs but an oneneſs in error, and one epiſtle directed againſt it, to convince and perſuade the diſciples in the churches of Galatia. And as for that oneneſs of judgment and affections that the word of God calls

Chriſtians, in all the churches of the ſaints, to endeavour after; as it is a quite other thing than your one eccleſiaſtic government, ſo the diſciples in the churches of Galatia ſeem not to be commended by the Apoſtle for it: neither is he there in the leaſt inſinuating, that one church in Galatia, as ſuch, was divided from another, but that the diſciples in the churches were biting and devouring one another. You ſay, all the churches, in one body, are required to beware of falſe teachers, guard againſt corrupt doctrines and diviſions. And to prove that they were called to do this in one body, in your ſenſe of it, you tell, the ſeveral churches of Galatia were but one lump. And this you would make out from the Apoſtle's telling the ſeveral churches of Galatia, as he ſaid to the church of Corinth, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole "lump:" As if that could not be as true in reſpect of every one of theſe churches as in reſpect of the church in Corinth; and as if that proverb might not be uſed toward all the churches of the ſaints in the like caſe, without underſtanding them all to be united in one viſible eccleſiaſtic government.

You ſay further, the Apoſtle ſays, "He would they were even "cut off that trouble them;" and then you inquire, What was ſaid to any particular church, for the maintaining of order, unity, and carrying on of joint edification, and preſervation of that ſacred body from being leavened with falſe doctrines and diſorders, which is not ſaid jointly to the ſeveral churches of Galatia? I make no queſtion but what is ſaid in the New Teſtament to any one church for theſe ends, is ſaid to every church in the world, to the end of time; and every church in Galatia had as much power unto theſe purpoſes as any other particular church; and the Apoſtle writes to theſe churches, as having every one of them this power. But he writes not to a church of rulers, repreſenting and ruling over all theſe churches; which is the remedy man's wiſdom has deviſed in ſuch caſes: nor does he write to theſe churches to proceed ſo with one another, as the Lord commands one brother in a church to do with another, Matth. xviii. though I ſee you would fain make that out to your reader, by your way of citing Gal. vi. 1. 2. which I read thus: "Bre-"thren, if a man (not a church) be overtaken in a fault, "ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of "meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfill the law of "Chriſt." And I would fain know of you, what is ſaid to the churches of Galatia, that might not be done by every one

one of theſe churches, and the diſcipies in them, without their being united in one eccleſiaſtic government, as you ſay? And ſeeing your one eccleſiaſtic body, you think, is for the very purpoſes for which the Apoſtle wrote to theſe churches, tell me why the Apoſtle's letter has no direction unto it, but unto the churches; and no reference unto it, but a requiring of ſuch things as might be done by every one of theſe churches, and the diſciples in them, without that body you ſpeak of? Tell me further, if any one of theſe churches could reform itſelf according to the Apoſtle's letter, without waiting for the bringing about of that reformation, by the agreement of the plurality of the elders of all theſe churches met in a body? And if any one of them was bound by the Apoſtle's letter to reform upon ſight thereof, and might do it, what was to hinder every one of the reſt to do the like?

But perhaps you mean no more by their being under one eccleſiaſtic government, but that the one letter ſent from the Apoſtle and them that were with him, bound and obliged them all to obedience. And in this ſenſe I will own to you, that all the churches of the ſaints are united; for they have one New Teſtament, and the ſcripture of the apoſtles and prophets, binding them all to obedience. And I muſt ſay, if you ſee a provincial or national church in the epiſtle to the churches of Galatia, or if it preſent a Preſbyterian face to you, as you ſpeak, you may look for it next in the firſt chapter of Geneſis.

To confirm the ſame thing that you was endeavouring to let us ſee in the epiſtle to the churches of Galatia, you ſay, the churches ſcattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and Bithynia, are expreſsly called "the flock of "God;" and the elders are conjunctly required to "feed," or, as the original word ſignifies, "rule and govern this one "flock which was among them;" not by conſtraint, but willingly. But it would have been fair to have told out the reſt, and ſaid, that the elders are required to feed the flock of God which is among them; and that not as being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to the flock; and then, p. 420. 421. you inquire, Are not all the diſperſed Jews throughout the different provinces of Pontus, &c. expreſsly called *one flock*, 1 Pet. i. 1. compared with chap. v. ℣ 2.? To which queſtion I anſwer negatively; and ſay, The flock there can be no other than ſuch a ſociety of Chriſtians as every company of elders had among them, and they could feed as being enſamples to it; even ſuch a flock as the elders

ders in Epheſus had among them, and fed as enſamples, taking heed to themſelves. and to all the flock over the which they were overſeers to feed the church, watching and warning every one. When elders are required to feed the flock, there is no queſtion but it imports rule and government; but the conſtant diſpenſation of the ordinances, and particularly the Lord's ſupper, is imported in it alſo: and as theſe are both comprehended in the Apoſtle's exhortation, what ground is there to imagine the Apoſtle is pointing to any other flock than that which the elders might feed, in the entire ſenſe of the word?

No company of elders is required to feed any flock here but the flock which is among them, and to which they are enſamples; and every company of elders is required as enſamples to feed the flock which is among them; and what kind of a flock that is, no man can be in any ſtrait to conceive. I cannot imagine that the Apoſtle is hereby requiring the elders in Epheſus, in the Proconſular Aſia, to feed the diſciples in Pontus; or elders in Alyth, to feed the Chriſtian people in the north or ſouth of Scotland, or at London, that perhaps never ſo much as heard of them or their converſation. It is poſſible that all that go under the Chriſtian name in Scotland, (who yet cannot be called God's heritage without ſuch a charity as may call all the world ſo), may have heard of ſome orders iſſued out from the general aſſembly, whereof an elder in Alyth happened to be a member; but is it poſſible, with ſobriety of mind, to be perſuaded, that ſuch a thing as this is intended in this exhortation to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you," taking the overſight ἐπισκοποῦντες, not as lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to the flock? I have frequently thought, that the outcry againſt the dioceſian biſhop's taking the overſight of a flock, which yet he could not overſee, came very ill from the miniſters of ſingle pariſhes, every one of them claiming ſhare in the common overſight of a whole nation, as one church.

You next inſiſt upon the direction of James's epiſtle to the twelve tribes ſcattered abroad, which, you ſay, were the ſame to whom Peter indited his firſt epiſtle. And, chap. v. 14. they are denominate *the church*: "Is any man ſick among you," *i. e.* the twelve tribes, "let him call for the "elders of the church, and let them pray over him." And then you deſire me to chuſe, whether this church was a ſingle congregation or not. But if I ſhould affirm, that the text plainly

plainly points to any one ſingle congregation, whereof any one of thoſe to whom he directs happened to be a member, and ſick; and if I ſhould deny, that the Apoſtle any where calls all thoſe to whom he directs *the church*, or *one church*, you will chuſe what you ſhall ſay next. You alledge further, That the ſame ſcattered tribes are deſigned *an aſſembly*, in the ſingular number, James ii. 2. And then you give me another choice; either it is an aſſembly for public worſhip, or an eccleſiaſtic judicature. But here is no choice to me, who acknowledge no eccleſiaſtic judicature, but that which is in a worſhipping congregation: and to this agrees what you ſay in referring to the ſynagogue upon this text; for the rulers of the ſynagogue ruled in a worſhipping congregation.

But you ſay, if *aſſembly* mean a Chriſtian aſſembly for public worſhip, your point is gained; namely, that many particular churches or congregations of Chriſtians are denominated *aſſembly*, in the ſingular number, ſeeing your aſſembly muſt undeniably have a reference to the twelve tribes, to whom the epiſtle was indited. And why did not you, by the ſame way of reaſoning, ſhew, from chap. ii. 11. 18. 20. that all the twelve tribes were one man made up of many ſingle men; ſeeing "Thou," and "O vain man," *&c.* muſt undeniably have a reference to the twelve tribes, to whom the epiſtle was indited? Theſe, Sir, are the methods you take with the holy ſcriptures, to make them look to yourſelf and your reader with a Preſbyterian face, and a national aſpect; and while I admire the wiſdom of God in guarding ſo ſtrictly againſt you in the ſcripture-language on this ſubject, I conſider with myſelf, how exceeding big you would look, if the language of the New Teſtament made but half ſo much for you, as it does for them that are againſt you in this queſtion.

You alſo affirm, p. 52. 53. *&c.* "That the word *church* "is made uſe of in the ſacred oracles to expreſs the paſtors "and rulers of the viſible body of Chriſt, who are peculiarly "called forth to rule and govern the Redeemer's flock, or "profeſſors of the true religion, by aſſembling themſelves "together in an eccleſiaſtic judicature, and their jointly ex-"erciſing acts of juriſdiction over them."

For this you cite Matth. xviii. 17. "Tell the church," and fly to the import of Hebrew words, and to Jewiſh traditions, when the queſtion is only about the import of the word *church*, as it is applied in the New Teſtament. And becauſe you cannot inſtruct your ſenſe of this text from the text or context, or from

from the writings of the apoſtles, that declare to us mo fully the things that began to be ſpoken by the Lo himſelf, you betake yourſelf to authorities, and rail at the I dependents: ſo you do not beg the queſtion of them; bu if I may alter your ſchool-phraſe a little, you plainly rob i It is the writings of the apoſtles, the writings of the Nev Teſtament, and not the cloud of commentators, and Jewiſ traditions, that muſt determine whoſe right this text is, th Independents or yours: and if it be thus his, and the tex itſelf ſpeak for him, though you come with an army, and take it from him, you hold it in unlawful poſſeſſion.

The *church* here muſt ſignify a ſociety, whereof the treſpaſſing brother, and the brother that tells him his fault, are members, and out of which the treſpaſſer muſt be caſt; and this cannot be a ſociety or congregation of rulers, unleſs we ſay, that diſcipline is to be exerciſed upon none but rulers. Now, though you ſhould manifeſt, that, by the two, ℣ 19. or three, ℣ 20. we muſt underſtand the elders of the church; yet, while you are not able to prove, that they are here, or any where elſe in the New Teſtament, impowered to bind and looſe, any otherwiſe but in the preſence, and with the conſent of the flock, whereof they are the immediate overſeers, and which they feed, not as lords, but as enſamples, you will never be able to manifeſt, that the word *church* here can bear your ſenſe of it. And ſeeing our Lord is ſpeaking of the kingdom of heaven, and of what was to take place in that kingdom, which you affirm was not ſet up till his reſurrection; you muſt find out the meaning of the word *church* here, by the writings of the New Teſtament after the Lord's reſurrection, and no otherwiſe. But I think I have ſome ground to ſay, that I find not the word *church*, in this ſenſe of yours, in all the writings of the New Teſtament; while yet I find it very frequently in a ſenſe which agrees excellently with the ſcope of this place. You cite Acts xv. 22. where the church is diſtinguiſhed from the elders, to prove, that it ſignifies the elders: and Acts xviii. 22. where it is ſaid, Paul went up and ſaluted the church, which you ſay muſt be the elders, becauſe it was impoſſible for Paul to ſalute the multitude of the members. But this requires much proof, as we ſhall ſee afterwards. And theſe are all your texts for a church repreſentative.

You find fault with me for affirming, That the word *church* always denotes a congregation; and would make the reader believe, that this ſaying of mine was an inference merely

merely from this, that the nation of Iſrael is called a *church*, and had one place of worſhip, p. 83. 84. But if you had not been willing to miſunderſtand my ſcope, *above*, p. 157. of the *Explication*, you might have perceived, that I was there laying a foundation for reaſoning in this manner. The word *church*, in all the unqueſtioned applications of it in the New Teſtament, denotes always one congregation; and when it is applied to a ſacred uſe, it ſignifies one worſhipping congregation, having one place of worſhip. The nation of Iſrael in the wilderneſs is called *the church*, Acts vii. 38. and it was one worſhipping congregation, having one altar. The antitype of that church, even the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, is undoubtedly called *the church*; and it is one worſhipping congregation aſſembling in that place where Jeſus the High Prieſt is entered, and having only one altar, whereof all the members are partakers. The congregations of the ſaints, aſſembling in one place, and partaking of the one bread and cup, and therein ſhewing forth the inviſible communion of the body myſtical, cannot be denied the title of *churches* in the New Teſtament; unleſs you that call the Jewiſh ſynagogues *churches*, go about to deny it, while yet you acknowledge, that the Chriſtian church was formed after the faſhion of the ſynagogues, and alledge, that the largeſt of the primitive churches might be ſerved with one altar, as it came to be called.

But you yourſelf affirm, that ſingle congregations are called *churches* in the New Teſtament; for, when you are commenting upon 1 Cor. xiv. 34. p. 341. you ſay, "What "can be more expreſs, to fix a plurality of congregations "here, than when the inſpired penman ſays, *Let your wo-* "*men keep ſilence*, not *in the church*, but *the churches?* "So, according to the expreſs letter of ſacred writ, we find "there churches in the church of Corinth; and what is the "amount of this, but that there was there a plurality of "ſingle congregations in one preſbyterial church? And "though, in the preceding verſe, there is mention of the "churches of the ſaints; yet this plurality of congregations "is ſpecified to the Corinthians, in that it is ſaid, *your wo-* "*men*, which reſtricts it immediately to the perſons to whom "the epiſtle was indited."

Though the falſehood of this gloſs of yours may appear abundantly from the text and context, and from what I have ſaid, *above*, *Expl. p.* 157. (which it was your buſineſs to confute before you had aſſerted your own gloſs with ſuch confidence);

yet it is beyond queſtion with you, that ſingle congregations are called *churches* in the New Teſtament. Now, Sir, when the queſtion is about the import of the word *church*, in a diſputed caſe, the firſt courſe we are to take in the deciſion of the queſtion, is, to know what is conſtantly imported in this word, in all caſes wherein the application of it is undoubted; and if ſuch an import be wanting in an application of the word which is queſtionable, it is a great prejudice againſt that application of it. Further, if the diſputed application of the word *church* be ſupported only by ſuch texts as may eaſily be underſtood in ſome one or other of the unqueſtioned ſenſes of it; then, till it be proven, that ſuch texts cannot bear the ordinary ſenſe of the word, they muſt be underſtood in that ſenſe.

You diſcover a peculiar genius upon the application of the word *church* unto the national congregation of the Old Teſtament: For you affirm, That the congregational ſhape of it is aboliſhed, and alſo ſuch a national ſhape as the Epiſcopalians contend for; though I do not know but they alſo may affirm, that their way, as to what reſpects government, abſtracting from the worſhip, is moral, and liker the national frame of the Old-Teſtament church than yours is. But you ſay, that ſo much of the national frame of the Jewiſh church, as is ſuited to the Preſbyterian national ſcheme, "is moral, "or *perpetui juris*, and was inſtituted by God under the "Old Teſtament for the exerciſe of diſcipline and juriſdic-"tion." Here I want proof for two things.

1. Let the divine inſtitution in the Old Teſtament be produced for "a national church in which are many particular "churches, united together in the unity of one viſible church-"government, wherein all the paſtors and rulers of theſe "ſeveral churches are equally concerned, without any par-"amount power of any one church, or the rulers thereof, "over another." This you ſay was inſtituted in the Old Teſtament; and in the proof of this you alledge, that the ſynagogues, where the moral worſhip and diſcipline was performed, were churches. But I very much want the proof of this odd aſſertion; and I alſo want to ſee the inſtitution of theſe churches in the Old Teſtament; and to know of you, if the church of Iſrael was a complete church, according to divine inſtitution, without theſe ſynagogues, where the inſtituted worſhip was not performed, and which do not appear in the firſt erection of that church, and which remain after that church is utterly aboliſhed? Next, you affirm, That all

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theſe ſynagogues, which you call *churches*, were united, and under one national and viſible eccleſiaſtical government. Here again I want the inſtitution for that union, and for the ſubordination of the ſynagogues, as ſuch, to the one viſible eccleſiaſtic government. And you need not tell me ſtories out of Jewiſh writers, or what was the practice of the Jews after the Old-Teſtament ſcripture was finiſhed, unleſs you firſt ſhew, that all their manner of worſhip and government then was of divine inſtitution. I likewiſe want inſtitution in the Old Teſtament for an equality of rulers in the one viſible church-government; and when you go about to inſtruct this, you may have in your eye 2 Chron. xix. 11.

2. The next thing you have to prove is, That this form of government, which you ſay was inſtituted, was alſo *perpetui juris*, or moral; and becauſe this would require more metaphyſics than you are maſter of, you ſatisfy yourſelf with ſaying, That no Independent can prove it typical. It will be no hard taſk for an Independent to prove the government of the Jewiſh church typical, as well as the worſhip, to them that believe Chriſt's kingdom in the true Iſrael as well as his prieſthood. But you muſt ſhew a clear inſtitution for a government under the Old Teſtament, before an Independent find himſelf concerned to make any inquiry, whether it was typical or not.

I have been tedious, beyond my firſt deſign, upon the inſtances that ſerve to ſupport this obſervation upon the criticiſm of your performance; but eſpecially touching the import of the word *church*; yet I hope to be the leſs tedious to you in the following obſervations.

OBSERVATION IV.

You miſtake the queſtion betwixt you and thoſe you call *Independents*, about church-members. I wiſh you had taken the *theſis* laid down for you in the explication of the propoſition; but it was eaſier for you to ſtate the queſtion in ſuch a manner, and lay down ſuch a propoſition to be proven, as might beſt anſwer to the old Preſbyterian arguments that were brought to prove, that real and inviſible grace is not the ground of admitting members of the viſible church. So you go about to prove, by ten arguments, as you ſay in the title of the ſection, p. 108. "That a credible profeſſion, and a "blameleſs converſation, are the grounds of admitting mem-"bers of the viſible church." But who ever ſaid, that none but real converts in the ſight of God, can be members of a

viſible church? I know no Independent that ever ſaid ſo; and whom are you then contending againſt? A credible profeſſion, and blameleſs converſation, is what you require; and what more is required by any to a viſible church-membership?

But the true difference is about the meaning of theſe words of yours, *a credible profeſſion and blameleſs converſation.* Give theſe words an explication conſiſtent with themſelves, and according to the law of Chriſt, and I am not the man that ſhall differ from you. But I find, a profeſſion of the faith upon which I ought not to credit that the profeſſor is a believer, is your credible profeſſion. Your credible profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and blameleſs converſation, is ſuch as gives no man ground to believe charitably, that the perſon that has it hath any thing of the ſpirit of Chriſt, or of the true Chriſtian faith, hope, and charity. Your credible profeſſor is one whoſe religion is no more but the breath of his mouth, wholly a ſtranger to the inward workings of the Holy Ghoſt; without whoſe common operations, I think, "no man can "call Jeſus Lord," or make the ſcriptural profeſſion of his name, 1 Cor. xii 3. Again, you ſay, there is nothing more needful as to ſuch who are baptized in any true church (you mean the church of Scotland for one, where the whole nation is baptized in infancy) but freedom from obſtinacy in ſcandal, and a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances of Chriſt. And you know what you mean by freedom from obſtinacy in ſcandal, in a nation going under the Chriſtian name, and where the clergy have more means than the word of God and ſpiritual motives to bring ſcandalous perſons to a ſubmiſſion. You alſo underſtand what you mean by a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances, in a nation where theſe ordinances are the cuſtoms of the country. And thus you make ſuch an account of your credible profeſſion and blameleſs converſation as agrees beſt to the church-members that we ſee in your national church, and that make up the far greater part of it. But would you have me to ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt is "the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of ſuch a "profeſſion?" and ſhall I believe, that there is no other profeſſion of his name required to make a man a fit member of a church of his, but ſuch a kind of a profeſſion as they that live in Mahometan countries make of Mahomet and his religion, and ſuch a profeſſion as is brought about in the ſame manner?

The credible profeſſion of which the ſcripture ſpeaks is brought about only by the influence of the word of God, the only

only inſtrument that the Lord put in the hand of his miniſters to make diſciples with; and it prevailed againſt all the wiſdom and power of man, and the cuſtoms of all countries, to raiſe a profeſſion of the name of Chriſt in the world, and to make viſible ſubjects of his kingdom. The word is not powerful even unto this end without the Spirit concurring in ſome way or other. But you contend for a profeſſion of Chriſtianity that does no way appear to flow from the power of the word of God; and it makes no odds as to your profeſſion, though the man that makes it be wholly a ſtranger to the inward workings of the Holy Ghoſt; the profeſſion of which the ſcripture ſpeaks intitled the profeſſors unto the charitable deſignations of *ſaints*, and *faithful in Chriſt Jeſus*; and, while they continued in the confeſſion of the faith, love, and hope that is in Chriſt Jeſus, they were ſo deſigned by the apoſtles themſelves, and the churches were *churches of the ſaints*.

But the profeſſion you contend for is ſuch as does no way warrant us to aſcribe theſe titles to the profeſſors, and your moſt ſpecious profeſſion has no claim to theſe. So keen are you on this point to gain it, that, for the ſake of it, you part with another, which, on other occaſions, ſeems very dear to you: for, p. 111. your words are, "And it is to be obſerved, that that which our Lord had in deſign in giving officers unto his church, was not for the perfecting and building up of a mere viſible church, but that which was inviſible; namely, the perfecting of the ſaints, and edifying the body of Chriſt, till they ſhould all come to the unity of the faith, and the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt," Eph. iv. 11. 12." I hope you will remember this when you ſhall again bring that text, to prove your catholic viſible body, for the perfecting and edification of which Chriſt hath given the goſpel-miniſtry. When you alledge, that, where the viſible church is called *the kingdom of heaven*, and by the name of *ſaints* and *faithful*, it can only be underſtood of the more valuable and better part, I want to know, how that more valuable and better part can be known by any man, ſo as he may call the church whereof theſe are members by deſignations proper to it. And, ſeeing faith and holineſs are no way ſhewed forth to man's eye in your right profeſſion of Chriſtianity, what ground has any man to ſay, that there are *ſaints* and *faithful* in any particular church whereof he happens to ſpeak? And, ſuppoſe a particular church made up of members upon ſuch a profeſſion as no way

way ſhews forth faith and holineſs, and one perſon in that church that is a believer, and holy in the ſight of God only, which is a ſuppoſeable caſe, will you ſay, that ſuch a church may be denominated *faithful* and *holy* becauſe of that perſon? And may you not as well ſay, that the family, or the city, or kingdom, where ſuch a perſon lives may be called *holy* and *faithful* on his account, ſeeing faith and holineſs are as little viſible in the church and its profeſſion unto the eye of man, as in any other ſociety of this world, according to your doctrine?

Faith and holineſs may appear to the eye of man, who can look no further than the outward appearance, where they are not really in the eye of the ſearcher of the hearts: and hence is the difference betwixt the *inviſible church* and the *viſible*; which is the outward appearance or repreſentation of that which is not viſible but in that repreſentation; but if faith and holineſs do not appear to man's eye in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, then God has no viſible church, no viſible kingdom in the world. And if theſe be viſible to man's eye in the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity, then muſt not thoſe who ſhew them forth in their profeſſion, be called by us the *ſaints* and *faithful*, unleſs we think evil, and judge their hearts? You make the members of the viſible church, and their profeſſion, ſuch as to have no title from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant, but in ſo far as he is their God, and they his juſtified and ſanctified ones: and for this, and alſo to prove, that the viſible church as ſuch is not within the new covenant, you cite Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. p. 111.

Here you eſtabliſh a difference very conſiderable betwixt that church where Moſes, and the prophets, and John Baptiſt, and the Lord, in the days of his fleſh, exerciſed their miniſtry, even the Old-Teſtament church, and the church of the New Teſtament. For, 1. All that church was within the covenant the Lord made with them when he brought them out of Egypt, whether they were juſtified and ſanctified truly or not; but none but they who are truly juſtified and ſanctified, and inviolably ſecured againſt apoſtaſy, are within the new covenant. 2. That viſible church had from God, by his expreſs law, a right to the ſeals of that covenant within which they were; and they that neglected theſe ſeals in that church were appointed to be cut off from among the people: but, according to you, the members of the viſible church under the New Teſtament have not any right from God to the ſeals

of

of the new covenant. Are not here, now, two covenants, two churches, the old and the new, extremely different?

Is not here a vaſt difference by you made between the *old viſible church*, and the *viſible church of the New Teſtament?* And yet you reaſon from the old viſible church as the ſame thing with the new, p. 119. 120. But has not God required a profeſſion of the new covenant (of which we read Jer. xxxi. and Heb. viii.) to be made in the world, that it may be ſome way viſible among men? Has he not called us to a charitable judgment of them that make the profeſſion of it, which he requires; that they are within that covenant, and his people, his juſtified and ſanctified ones, referring the judgment of their hearts unto him, and forbidden us to think evil? Has he not, by his law in the New Teſtament, annexed the outward ſeals of that covenant, which he hath committed to men to diſpenſe, unto that outward profeſſion of the covenant, which he hath ſubjected to man's judgment of charity? Who are they then that have a right from God to theſe ſeals; they that are known only to him to be his juſtified and ſanctified ones, and within the new covenant, or they that are ſo, according to the rules of a profeſſion laid down in his word, in the ſight of men?

We find he has commanded his miniſters to baptize all them that are made diſciples by the influence of the word of the New Teſtament; all and every one of them that believe, with all their heart, that Jeſus, who was crucified, and raiſed again, is the Son of God, and that gladly receive the word of the goſpel teſtimony and exhortation, or the new covenant: and he hath warranted them to baptize the infant ſeed of ſuch, whom he calls holy, and of whom he ſays the kingdom of heaven is, and to whom the promiſe of the new covenant, whereof baptiſm is the ſeal, is, as it is to their parent; and he has not commanded them to baptize any other. Now, if this command reſpect ſuch only as appearing in his eye, his miniſters can never obey it; but if it reſpect them whom he warrants his miniſters to account ſuch by his word, then the ſeal of baptiſm belongs, by his law, to every one of them, and none elſe but them, that, unto man's eye looking charitably on them according to the word of God, are within the bond of the new covenant, and God's juſtified and ſanctified ones, whatever they be in the eye of God; who hath never appointed this ſeal to be diſpenſed according to the rule of his omniſcience, but according to the rules he has laid down in his word, for a profeſſion of the new covenant, and judgment

ment of charity thereupon, touching them that profeſs it, and their infant ſeed; who are to be judged of according to the parents profeſſion while infants, but according to their own profeſſion when come to years.

Every perſon that has a right to baptiſm, then, is viſibly, whatever he be really, within the new covenant, and one of God's juſtified and ſanctified people; and every one that is thus viſibly within the new covenant, and viſibly a member of the true New-Teſtament church, the body myſtical, has a right, by the law of Chriſt, to the ſeal of baptiſm, and none elſe; and we have no manner of concern with what men are inviſibly and in the ſight of God.

Again, we find the outward ſeal of the Lord's ſupper delivered to the diſciples in the churches of the ſaints, where the ordinance of diſcipline is placed, 1 Cor. xi. 20. 22. 23. in every one of which churches, partaking together in this ordinance, the union and communion of the catholic church, the myſtical body, is viſible, 1 Cor. x. 15. 16. 17. 18. The firſt of theſe churches was that with which the Lord himſelf aſſembled after his reſurrection, and from which he was taken up into heaven, and upon which he poured down the Holy Ghoſt, Luke xxiv. 33. 36. 49.—53. compare Acts i. 3. 8.—15. Acts ii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 41. 42. 46. 47. Theſe churches are made up of viſible members of the New-Teſtament church, the body myſtical, that are viſibly within the new covenant, and are viſibly God's juſtified and ſanctified people; that is, them that appear to the eye of man, according to the rule of the word, to be ſuch, by their own profeſſion of the new covenant.

The firſt church was made up of them that, being pricked in their hearts by the word, and by the word influenced to receive the goſpel teſtimony and exhortation gladly, and being thereupon baptized, did join themſelves to, and were received by the hundred and twenty, to continue ſtedfaſtly with them, with one accord, and as one ſoul, in the doctrine and fellowſhip, and breaking of bread, and prayers; and this in obedience to that call, "Save yourſelves from this un-" toward generation." If theſe perſons were ſuch in the eye of God as they are deſcribed, then they were really within the new covenant, and members of the inviſible church. But ſeeing this cannot be affirmed, if they were viſibly in the eye of men ſuch as they are deſcribed, then they were viſibly members of the New-Teſtament church of the firſt-born, and viſibly within the covenant; and that church, as a church,

church, was viſible in their viſible union together as a church. This viſible church, and every member of it, had a title from God to that viſible ſeal of the new covenant, the Lord's ſupper; and ſo has every ſuch viſible church to the end of the world. The church at Antioch was the firſt of the Gentiles; and it conſiſted of them that, by the hand of the Lord going along with his goſpel, were influenced to believe, and turn to the Lord, and in whom Barnabas ſaw the grace of God; and they were added to the Lord in becoming a church, by the influence of his exhortation, "That, with "purpoſe of heart, they would cleave to the Lord," Acts xi. 20. 26. Now, did not theſe, whatever they were in the eye of God, appear to be within the new covenant, and to be God's juſtified and ſanctified ones? And did not the Lord's ſupper belong to them by right, when joined together viſibly, to partake of it as one body? Or, unto whom did it belong?

The inviſible church, as ſuch, cannot partake of the ſupper, nor can all they that appear to be members of it, partake of it either. Infants of believing parents cannot, nor can viſible members of it, who, by their own profeſſion, have right to baptiſm, partake of it by any ſcripture-warrant, without being joined to a viſible church: ſo that it is only the members of a viſible church, as ſuch, that have a ſcripture-title to that ſeal of the new covenant, the Lord's ſupper. Thus you ſee how, under your correction, I take upon me to differ from your confident aſſertion, that the members of the viſible church, as ſuch, have not any title from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant: and when you correct me in this point, I hope you will ſhew me how the members of the inviſible church, as ſuch, and as diſtinguiſhed from the viſible, can partake of, and be admitted to theſe ſeals.

As the profeſſion you contend for is a thing altogether foreign to the new covenant, and gives no man any title to the ſeals of it, and altogether foreign to faith and holineſs; ſo it is ſuch a thing as makes no man that has it an object of that peculiar love which Chriſt requires us to have to his brethren, his redeemed, the members of his body. Your profeſſion, that you plead for, can never exhibit ſuch a perſon to you. For while, on the one hand, a perſon known to be rebellious againſt the Lord, ought, according to your argument, p. 120. to be admitted a member of the viſible church, without any poſitive ſigns of grace; on the other

hand, when Chriſt requires his diſciples to love one another, as he has loved them, and calls you to love the brethren whom you have ſeen, you are ready to anſwer as thoſe, Matth. xxv. "When ſaw we thee," *&c.* How ſhould one of thoſe whom Chriſt has loved unto the death be ſeen? How ſhall I know my brother for whom Chriſt died? For it can only be ſaid of the inviſible church, that it is redeemed with Chriſt's blood; and that church is no way viſible to me, in the members of the viſible church that make the right profeſſion neceſſary unto church-membership. And as for the profeſſion that the Independents look after, it manifeſtly tends to open a door for hypocrites, and ſhut it againſt many of thoſe who may be the elect of God. And when I am forbidden to judge my brother, or ſet at nought my weak brother, it is unlawful for me to diſcern betwixt one whom the law of Chriſt bids me love as a brother "for whom Chriſt "died," though weak, and one who is not, according to that law, to be looked upon by me as a brother, or to form a judgment of charity about any man, that he is a brother "for whom Chriſt died."

Thus, Sir, you are for joining with them as church-members that are known to be rebellious againſt God, and for thinking evil of them that make the faireſt and moſt credible profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and for judging them; and pervert the word of God, to harden yourſelf, in making void the Lord's command of brotherly love, and rendering it of none effect to you, and to as many as your book can influence to think as you do. But though you alledge that the words, in the judgment of charity, are of no conſideration, Acts xx. 28. and ſay the text affords no foundation for them; will you alſo baniſh the judgment of charity from that text and context, from whence you go about to prove, that we ought not to form a judgment upon that head, whether a man be to us a brother or not? And how will you explain the 15th verſe of that 14th chapter of the Romans, "Deſtroy not him "with thy meat for whom Chriſt died," without the judgment of charity, unleſs you be for univerſal redemption? And if this deſignation was not due to church-members, credibly profeſſing the faith, by the law of brotherly love, while they continued in that profeſſion; what will you make of them that "deny the Lord that bought them?" 2 Pet. ii. 1. And if theſe words, *the judgment of charity*, can be of no conſideration, Acts xx. 28. then you may let me underſtand the force of the Apoſtle's argument there, to move the elders

ers of the Epheſian church "to take heed to, and feed all "that flock of which they were overſeers." He ſays, "Take heed to all the flock, to feed the church of God "which he hath purchaſed with his own blood." And might not the elders, according to you, have anſwered him, The flock of which we are overſeers is not "the church of God "purchaſed with his blood." For that is only the inviſible church, which cannot appear to us in the flock which we overſee. If we could ſee that redeemed flock, we ſhould take heed to it, and do it all the ſervice we can; but that is not the object of ſenſe, and ſo we cannot overſee it, nor take care of it?

I conceive, Sir, it was your buſineſs to anſwer my argument upon this text, in the explication of the propoſition, which proved, that the judgment of charity muſt be of ſome conſideration in it; and not to talk beſide the purpoſe, about univerſal redemption, and the controverſy with the Arminians, when it could not but be evident to any conſidering man, that the ſenſe of that text which I go upon, ſerves to overthrow any argument that can be brought from theſe words for univerſal redemption. And when I conſider as impartially as I can the 29th and 30th verſes, I have ſtill ground to believe, that it might be ſaid, agreeably to ſcripture-ſtyle, that all the flock at Epheſus was "God's flock purchaſed with "his blood." For that way of ſpeaking is the very ſame with what you have Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 1.; and is every way agreeable to the ſtyle of our Lord's new commandment of brotherly love, a particular branch of which the Apoſtle is recommending to the elders of the Epheſian church. Compare John xxi. 15. 16. 17.

The profeſſion of Chriſtianity you contend for, under the ſpecious name of *a credible profeſſion*, and *blameleſs converſation*, ſeems to me to be a thing altogether of another kind, than that confeſſion of the faith, and of the name of Jeſus, ſo much inſiſted on in the ſcriptures; even that which makes the confeſſors or profeſſors hated of all nations, and a man's foes thoſe of his own houſe; and which endears the profeſſors to one another, as brethren, and members one of another, and which has ſo many great and precious promiſes annexed to it, and ſo many grievous threatenings directed againſt apoſtaſy from it. As I take it, the profeſſion you are contending for, is ſo far from being of the ſame kind with this, that it is ſet up unto the baniſhing of it out of the world; and is no other but that form of godlineſs that was

ſhifted in by Antichriſt into the room of the ancient profeſſion, that was expreſſive of the power of godlineſs, and had a near relation to it. And that is a form of godlineſs not owing to the power of the goſpel, but to the power of man; not ſhewing forth faith and holineſs, nor making theſe any way viſible in them upon whom it is: but it is upon them that are known to be rebellious againſt God; not manifeſting redeeming love, nor the grace of the Holy Ghoſt, but rendering theſe utterly inviſible, and baniſhing brotherly love, and the judgment of charity, from the profeſſion of the name of Jeſus; not expoſing men to perſecution from the world of the ungodly, but making the church and the world one, and extinguiſhing the old open ſtrife for the faith once delivered to the ſaints. There were ungodly men that crept in unawares into the firſt churches, under the profeſſion of the name of Jeſus: but this form of godlineſs ſerved unto the open entrance of the ungodly world, known to be rebellious againſt God, into the outer court of the temple, to defile it; and thus it was trodden under foot of the Gentiles, the clergy ruling among them as the lords of the Gentiles.

Againſt this form of godlineſs, that has no relation to the power of it, and taken on by the world openly rebellious againſt God, and denying the power of godlineſs, and doing their beſt to make it inviſible in the world, the Apoſtle bends his diſcourſe, 2 Tim. 3d chapter throughout; while he is foretelling the antichriſtian ſtate of things, and foreſhewing the antichriſtian clergy, the true offspring of the old Judaiſing teachers, who were Phariſaical in their doctrine of juſtification, preſſed after a conformity to the Jewiſh church, and ſought after a worldly kingdom, and ſet themſelves againſt ſuch a profeſſion of the truth of the goſpel as expoſed men to perſecution; and alſo the offspring of them that turned the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs. Whereas you would have the Apoſtle there ſpeaking only of turning away from ſuch men as the apoſtles and the firſt Chriſtian teachers were themſelves accounted to be, by the rulers of the Jewiſh ſynagogues; and as thoſe muſt ever be accounted in the world, who adhere to the word of God as their only rule, and will not turn aſide to fables, and that turn away from them that have "the form "of godlineſs, denying the power of it," who muſt be the prevailing party for number, when the nations of the world paſs under the Chriſtian name. For upon that of turning away, you ſay, he had "a ſpecial eye to ſchiſmatical and falſe "teachers, who, by a ſpecious form of godlineſs, endea-

"vour

" vour to ſeduce perſons from their lawful paſtors, (by the " law of the nation, as I take it), and carry them off from " the communion of the church (I underſtand, by law eſta- " bliſhed, or the pariſh-church) unto private aſſemblies and " houſe-meetings. This is manifeſt from the 6th and 7th " verſes. And it is remarkable, that the greateſt part of " their conqueſts were to be ſilly women, who, by the form " and appearance of their godlineſs, and the fair ſhew they " made of more than ordinary ſanctity, they impoſed upon " them, as being the weaker ſex, and generally of leſs judg- " ment, reaſon, and underſtanding."

While you thus maliciouſly pervert the holy word of God, to ſhew that men ought to turn away from the objects of your hatred, I think I hear a ruler of a Jewiſh ſynagogue, or a Jewiſh prieſt, in his zeal for the temple, ſpeaking againſt the apoſtles and their followers; or a Popiſh prieſt ſpeaking againſt Proteſtant teachers and their followers, before they came to have a national eſtabliſhment, or before they had drawn their form over a nation inſtead of the Popiſh form; or an Epiſcopal clergyman ſpeaking againſt the conventicles in Scotland in the laſt age. And they that pretend to be the true offspring of thoſe that were in former times thus ſpoken againſt, can abundantly diſcover the ſpirit that thus perſecuted, againſt thoſe called *Independents* now.

Though you are for their being church-members, whom we are not to believe to be diſciples; yet you are ſtill for ſome diſtinction between the members of the viſible church and the reſt of the world. And you make the enjoying of the word preached, the privilege of that viſible church, even as the partaking of the holy ſacrament. And thus you deprive the reſt of the world of the enjoyment of the word preached; ſo condemning yourſelf in the taking up of that poor old cant againſt the Independents, That a miniſter, according to their ſcheme, cannot preach, as a miniſter of the goſpel, to any but the flock to which he is paſtor.

If you had conſidered the explication of the propoſition, which you pretend to confute, you might have found, it is the judgment of ſuch as contend for what you call *Independency*, That every paſtor of a church is ſet there for ſpreading the goſpel in the world, as a light on a golden candleſtick, and bears Chriſt's commiſſion to preach the goſpel, as his miniſter, to every creature; neither can you ſhow any one poſition in that treatiſe, wherewith this is inconſiſtent. But your argument on this head goes upon the ſuppoſition,

that

that a paſtor has not a commiſſion from Chriſt to preach to any as his miniſter, but them to whom he is a paſtor: and becauſe you do not pretend to be paſtors to more than that catholic viſible body of which you ſpeak, by the ſame rule, you preach only as private perſons to the reſt of the world, that are not of that viſible church; and ſo you make the preaching of the word to be the privilege of that church to which men are admitted upon the grounds whereon you difference your viſible catholic body from the world. But I thought you would have been aſhamed to bring this old ridiculous charge againſt them you have now to do with, till you had cleared yourſelf, as a paſtor of the catholic church viſible, of the ſame charge againſt yourſelf, as to preaching to them that are not members of that church; yet, to do you juſtice, you have done ſomething toward that, in making the enjoying of the preached word to be the privilege of the members of that church; and ſo the controverſy betwixt you and me will come to this, Whether paſtors be Chriſt's miniſters to the viſible church only, by Chriſt's commiſſion, Matth. xxviii. or to the world? I own it is very agreeable to your ſcheme, that men ſhould firſt, by means foreign to the goſpel, be turned in to the viſible church, and ſo be made objects of the goſpel meſſage and call; and I ſhall not call this altogether diſagreeable to the conſtitution of the church that had its beginnings in Conſtantine's days; but nothing is more diſagreeable to the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church.

As to the infant-ſeed of believing parents, who are viſible members of the body of Chriſt with their parents, and by their credible profeſſion, and ſo have a right to baptiſm; they paſs out of the ſtate of the infant ſeed of believers, wherein they were to be judged of according to their parents profeſſion, when they become the objects of the goſpel-call; and cannot be the members of a viſible church, but by their own credible profeſſion brought about by the goſpel. You yourſelf require of them a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances of Chriſt; though yet, in another place, you affirm, "That he who is baptized, according to the command of Chriſt, has thereby a ſealed right to all the external privileges belonging to that covenant of which baptiſm is the ſeal; and this continues till it be forfeited by ſome deed or action of the perſon," p. 153. which, if you pleaſe, you may prove, and then reconcile with what you ſay, p. 111. and p. 118.

There

There is another ſuppoſition of yours, by which you endeavour to fix another abſurdity upon the Independent principles; and that ſuppoſition ſeems to me to be this: That the heart-ſearching word of God, in the mouth of a paſtor, cannot convince and convert a hypocrite that is a church-member, and charitably judged a brother in Chriſt by the paſtor; and that he cannot, in preaching, call them in the name of God to be reconciled to God, or deal in a doctrinal way with the conſciences of his church, to convince and convert them, whom yet in the buſineſs of church-order, and in diſpenſing church-privileges, he looks upon as converted already. As this ſuppoſition of yours wants much proof, and is not altogether conſiſtent with a diſtinction of your own, p. 147.; ſo I am ſure it is inconſiſtent with the ſtrain of the doctrine of the paſtors of ſuch churches, in whoſe printed ſermons I have ſeen as much ſaid, and to as good purpoſe, for the conviction and converſion of the moſt refined hypocrites, as ever I ſaw or heard in any other ſermons; and though in all thoſe church-duties wherein they muſt act according to the judgment of charity, the Independents reckon themſelves obliged not to think evil; yet, in the diſpenſation of the goſpel-doctrine in the name of God toward the conſciences of men when they preach, they are not the preachers in the world that are moſt liable to the charge of ſewing pillows under the arms of church-members or others.

You ſeem to have a great prejudice at what you call *poſitive evidences*, and judging upon them in the admiſſion of church-members; and I am at ſome loſs to underſtand what you mean by them, though I have heard the expreſſion frequently, among people of your opinion, uſed to expreſs ſome very ill thing. If you mean by poſitive evidences, infallible evidences of a thing that none but God infallibly knows, and can aſſure a man's own conſcience of with reſpect to a man himſelf, I think it would be a very great evil for a man to require ſuch evidence to found his judgment of charity concerning another man's faith and holineſs, or concerning his being an object of brother love: and I think he is bound by the law of Chriſt to form his judgment in this matter, upon leſs evidence. But if you mean poſitive evidence, in oppoſition to negative, which is no evidence; I muſt own, I know not how to form a judgment of charity, without ſome poſitive evidence. And is not a credible profeſſion ſomething poſitive? Are not thoſe things you bring from the fathers upon

on this ſubject poſitive evidences? Is not a credible profeſſion an evidence which I ought to credit for ſomething? And what is that but what is profeſſed? Is not then a credible profeſſion of the faith, love, and hope that is in Chriſt, or of Chriſtianity, a poſitive evidence of a man's being an object of brotherly love, which evidence ought to be the ground of my judgment of charity concerning him that he is a Chriſtian, a believer in Chriſt, a brother for whom Chriſt died? If it be otherwiſe, and if there be no evidence upon which I can charitably judge that any man is a brother for whom Chriſt died, then tell me, how I can evidence my love to Jeſus Chriſt in the labour of love toward my brother whom I have ſeen, and my love to God in my love to them that are begotten of him?

You own that paſtors are to make inquiry into the ſtate of the flock. But what are they to inquire after? Are they to ſeek to diſtinguiſh faith as it lies in the heart, from hidden hypocriſy there? That is an inquiry that I am ſure no paſtor is called to, or capable of; for no man has ought to do with any more but what is viſible to man's eye. Thus, while you moſt unjuſtly charge others with the crime of ſearching mens hearts, you yourſelf would ſearch it, or elſe conſtitute two kinds of viſible Chriſtianity, and you condemn the Independent, becauſe he rejects one of them as unſcriptural, and not to be found in the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, the ſcriptural confeſſion of faith being but one.

I ſhall trouble you no further on this head, but refer you to the explication of the propoſition; only I want ſcripture-proof for a propoſition of yours, *viz.* That a perſon, being overtaken in ſome fault, muſt be debarred from ſealing ordinances, till the ſcandal be removed according to Chriſt's rule; and yet he is ſtill a member of the viſible church, unleſs his obſtinacy occaſion his rejection by the ſentence of excommunication. Bring me clear ſcripture-proof for this debarring or ſuſpenſion from ſealing ordinances; and do not tell me of all orthodox divines, that is, all divines that think as you do, and that is yourſelf.

OBSERVATION V.

It ſeems to me that you do not attend to the proceſs of the argument about the nature of the church in Jeruſalem, the church in Antioch, and in Epheſus, *&c.* For when it is alledged

ledged by us, that the ſcripture language, in the deſcription of the church at Jeruſalem, makes for one congregation, you affirm it is impoſſible it could be ſo, becauſe of ſeveral things you alledge from other texts: ſo that the whole of your cauſe depends upon the proof of this impoſſibility: and till you prove it, whatever noiſe you make, you do indeed ſay nothing to the purpoſe. But, inſtead of demonſtrating this, you go about to put the Independent to prove; whereas he has nothing to be proven, till you inſtruct your impoſſibility; and then he will tell you how far he agrees with your gloſſes upon the texts that now ſpeak moſt plainly to him of one congregation. I humbly conceive you have failed in the proof of the impoſſibility of the church in Jeruſalem its being one congregation, unleſs you think the proof is finiſhed when you ſeek that I ſhould tell you how that church could meet in one place, from time to time, to obſerve the inſtituted worſhip; and when, upon my telling you ſomething feaſible or poſſible, you call for proof that it was actually ſo as I ſay. But ſeeing your whole ſcheme hangs upon the ſuppoſition of the impoſſibility of the church at Jeruſalem eſpecially its being one congregation, you muſt either demonſtrate this ſuppoſition, or, to uſe your own beloved phraſe, *beg the thing in queſtion.*

This ſuppoſition, from which your ſcheme is inferred, is itſelf an inference which you, and all Preſbyterian writers againſt Independency, draw from the number of converts in Jeruſalem, and of believing Jews, the diverſity of languages there, and the number of teachers. To make your ſuppoſition ſtand upon theſe foundations, you have theſe things to prove.

1. That all thoſe converted by the goſpel in Jeruſalem were members of that church. You know where you affirm, that the church in the ſingular number, ſo far as you can obſerve, is no where in the New Teſtament made uſe of in expreſs terms to denote any more than the Chriſtians in ſome city, except when the catholic church is meant. And I want that you ſhould inform me, how all the numbers that were from time to time converted by the goſpel in Jeruſalem, where the Jews throughout Judea and Galilee were ſtill reſorting, and where the Jews throughout the world were ſeveral times in the year coming to worſhip, can be ſaid to be only of the Jews that inhabited Jeruſalem? Were they the only Jews about the temple? or was converting grace confined to them? And do we not expreſsly read of a multitude that came from the cities round about, bringing ſick folks to

be healed by the apoſtles? Though churches be not mentioned throughout Judea and Galilee, till after the diſperſion; yet, when we come to ſpeak of impoſſibilities, it will be hard to prove it impoſſible that there were not churches throughout Judea and Galilee before. Probable conjectures will not do, where an impoſſibility is to be proven.

2. It is alſo to be made manifeſt, That there was no place, before the diſperſion, where all the members of the church could poſſibly aſſemble as one congregation. The ſcripture ſpeaks expreſsly of their meeting in the temple, and in Solomon's porch. Againſt this it uſed to be ſaid, that Solomon's porch could not hold them all, taking it for the porch of the temple, 2 Chron. iii. 4. But you have taken pains to tell us, that the true Solomon's porch could not only hold one vaſt congregation, but very many; ſo that you have turned this branch of the proof of your impoſſibility out of doors; only you would have your readers imagine, that there were ſuch partitions in Solomon's porch for diſtinct congregations, as there are for the ſeveral pariſhes in Glaſgow.

3. The next thing to be proven is, That there was no common language among the dwellers in Jeruſalem. That they underſtood different languages, ſeverals of them that inhabited that city, there is no queſtion; but it will not be eaſy to demonſtrate, that there was no common language among the inhabitants. And for what is ſaid of the people mentioned Acts ii. if words can ſignify any thing of that kind, they all underſtood the language of Peter's ſermon, even all that were converted by it.

4. You muſt alſo prove, That the twelve apoſtles, the then paſtors and teachers of that church, could not find room for their gifts of teaching and exhorting, and of preaching, in a church that aſſembled every day in the temple; and that they had not work enough, who, beſide their conſtant "labour "in the word and doctrine," in the daily aſſemblies of the church, and among the church-members, were bearing witneſs of the Lord's reſurrection, and preaching to multitudes, both about the temple and in private houſes, as occaſion offered.

5. It is next to be made evident, That, when the diſperſion was, and while the perſecution that aroſe about Stephen laſted, any more of the church remained in Jeruſalem than as many as could aſſemble in ſome private place, or even that the church did at all aſſemble in the very heat of the perſecution. In the proof of this it is uſually affirmed, that only

teachers

teachers were ſcattered abroad; and, when you ſay this, you muſt mean office-bearers, elders; for you will not allow, that any of the members of that church not in office, whatever extraordinary gifts they were endowed with, preached the goſpel, however they might be called to it at that time. But though it be manifeſt, that they that were ſcattered abroad went every where preaching the word; yet it is moſt evident, that all they that were perſecuted and ſcattered did not preach; unleſs we ſhould ſay, that women preached; and then, I think, you will be in no ſtrait to ſay, that all the members of the church that were men preached, Acts i. 3. 4. I have no reaſon to queſtion, that the ſame thing is meant by the church in ℣ 1. & 3.; and it is plain in ℣ 3. that the church was both men and women.

6. It muſt alſo be demonſtrated, That all the myriads of believing Jews, long after the diſperſion, were members of the church that was then in Jeruſalem, and was under the immediate inſpection of the preſbytery there. And you may likewiſe try your critical ſkill a little, for your diverſion, upon the word *myriads*, to ſhew, that it always, in the New Teſtament, is to be taken to ſignify *ten thouſands*; and that it muſt be ſo taken Luke xii. 1. where you find myriads in one congregation.

Unleſs theſe things be demonſtrated, your ſuppoſition falls to the ground, and your conſtitution of the Chriſtian church that is founded upon it comes to nought. And when we ſhall ſee them proven, then we ſhall conſider what was the plan of the church laid down in Jeruſalem to be followed in after ages, and whether there were in that place diſtinct fixed congregations and ſeſſions, united in a claſſical preſbytery, and ſubject to it: and, till you be able to produce a pattern for ſuch ſeſſions in the New Teſtament, I will eaſily deny, that there is any pattern there for your claſſical preſbyteries. For whatever kind the preſbytery in Jeruſalem was of, if it had not kirk-ſeſſions under it, if it was not compounded of them, it was no pattern for your claſſical preſbytery: and as I reckon you and I will agree, that the other ſcripture-preſbyteries were of the ſame kind with that at Jeruſalem; ſo, when we come down to primitive churches in the ſecond and third centuries, we will find no preſbytery there but the elderſhip of one church, that was ſerved with one altar. But till you demonſtrate your foreſaid ſuppoſition, which I do not expect to ſee of a ſudden, I muſt remain ſecure in the poſſeſſion of as plain a truth as ſcripture-words have made it,

that the church in Jeruſalem did all aſſemble with one accord in one place: and if there was no preſbytery there but a congregational one, we need not go to Epheſus, or any where elſe, to ſeek a claſſis; I am ſure, not to Lyſtra, where, you ſay, was the preſbytery that laid hands on Timothy. I would be content to ſee how you make up the proof of a claſſical preſbytery in that place, againſt the author of the *Defence of national churches*, who affirms it to be a feſſion; for he brings Acts xiv. 23. to prove kirk-ſeſſions: and he alſo is of the mind, that the churches throughout Judea and Galilee were certainly congregational.

There are now three of you that have written for claſſical preſbytery, the author of the *Defence of national churches*, the author of the *Naked truth*, and yourſelf, the author of the *Original conſtitution of the church*; and I humbly adviſe you to enter into a concert among yourſelves, that you may fully underſtand your own ſcheme, and come to underſtand one another, and be reconciled among yourſelves before you write again, with the intolerable confidence you have hitherto ſhewed, againſt the congregational way. But how ſhould I expect that you will write conſiſtently with one another, while I think it is moſt eaſy to manifeſt, that there is not any one of you that writes conſiſtently with himſelf?

OBSERVATION VI.

The grounds you lay down for your arguings to prove the ſubordination of judicatures, are ſuch as do indeed ſerve to overthrow it, and to eſtabliſh the congregational plan as the only ſcriptural plan.

I. Your firſt foundation, which you call a noble one, is the nature of the unity or oneneſs of the viſible body of Chriſt; and upon this I offer the following things to your ſerious conſideration.

1. As you have not yet manifeſted any viſible body of Chriſt, but a congregation of the viſible members of his myſtical body coming together to the Lord's ſupper; ſo the oneneſs of ſuch a viſible body of Chriſt will never make out a ſubordination of judicatures; but, if it be well conſidered, does not appear to conſiſt with it. We may have a metaphyſical view of the univerſality of the viſible members of the myſtical body of Chriſt; but that this univerſality of viſible members is, or ever was at any time, one viſible church in a political ſenſe, or one viſibly organiſed body, is ſo far from being

being a truth, that it is evidently falſe in fact. And if all theſe viſible members of the body of Chriſt ſhould at any time happen to be members of a viſible body of his, all partaking of that one bread and cup; this is a thing altogether accidental unto Chriſt's inſtitution of ſuch a church or viſible body of his: yea, there are ſome viſible members of that myſtical body into which we are baptized, that are not capable of being one bread and one body in ſuch a viſible church, nor objects of its diſcipline, nor of acting any part as members of it; and theſe are the infant-ſeed of believing parents, of whom the kingdom of heaven is, as well as of their believing parents, and who are, by the expreſs word of God, to be accounted holy.

Now, a viſible church or body of Chriſt is united while it continues ſtedfaſtly aſſembling in his name with one accord in the doctrine, and in the fellowſhip, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers, praiſing God with one mind, and one mouth, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel, endeavouring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace, and forbearing one another in love, walking in an orderly ſubjection in the Lord, unto an elderſhip or preſbytery of their own chuſing, and maintained by themſelves, and obſerving the Lord's command, Matth. xviii. 15.—20. The unity of ſuch a body of Chriſt is remarkable in the Lord's ſupper, wherein all the members are one bread and one body, being all partakers of that one bread; and this ſhews forth the union and communion of Chriſt's myſtical body, even as that bread and that cup ſhews forth his body and blood, wherein the myſtical body has communion, 1 Cor. x. 15. 16. 17. This unity of a viſible body of Chriſt is likewiſe manifeſt in its order and diſcipline; while the biſhops or elders do all agree, in the preſence of the flock, to bind or looſe in Chriſt's name, and therein unanimouſly profeſs their ſubjection to their one and only Lord Chriſt, and his mind and will manifeſted in his word, which is the ſceptre of his kingdom, thus ruling and leading the flock as examples, and not as lords over God's heritage; and while the flock unanimouſly profeſſes ſubjection to the authority of their Lord Chriſt in his word, in conſenting to the agreement of his elders, and, as one ſoul, concurring with them in calling on his name for binding or for looſing.

When you ſhall manifeſt, that the ſubordination of judicatures is conſiſtent with all this unity of a viſible body of Chriſt, I ſhall attend to you: but if, when it came in, under pretence

pretence of curing and preventing diviſions, it made more; and when it pretended only to conduce to the well-being of churches, it ſerved to deſtroy their being, you muſt excuſe me, if I ſay, that the unity and oneneſs of a viſible body of Chriſt, eſtabliſhes not the ſubordination of judicatures, but makes it void.

2. Suppoſing it were true, as it is falſe, that you ſay, p. 88. 89. "That goſpel-ordinances and church-privileges were given primarily to the univerſality of profeſſors; and that "particular aſſemblies of Chriſtians have their riſe merely "from the impoſſibility of their joining all together, for the "convenient adminiſtration of goſpel-ordinances, and enjoying other ordinary church-privileges:" I ſay, ſuppoſing this, unto whom does this gift of ordinances and privileges belong in the next place, when the univerſality of profeſſors cannot aſſemble in one place, but unto them that can conveniently aſſemble for the adminiſtration and enjoyment of them all? And what ſociety is it upon which the grant of all goſpel-ordinances and church privileges falls, if it be not a congregation of the ſaints? There are the inſtitutions of worſhip, there muſt the Lord's ſupper be, and no where elſe; there are all the ordinary officers of Chriſt's appointment. Upon this ſociety, therefore, and none other, does the inſtitution of ordinances, and grant of church-privileges, fall, when the univerſality of profeſſors cannot aſſemble. And if you inquire, Why may not this grant belong to a ſociety made up out of theſe churches, and repreſenting them? I anſwer, It cannot; becauſe ſuch a ſociety, give it what name you will, cannot obſerve all theſe ordinances, and enjoy all theſe privileges.

Your argument for extending the government as far as it can be extended, will conclude as well for managing the Lord's ſupper as extenſively, and placing it in as large a ſociety as that wherein the paſſover was placed. For the more extenſively the ordinances are adminiſtered, the more agreeable it is ſtill to the primary grant; which was, ſay you, to the catholic church viſible; and ſo one communion-table, from off which the whole members of the catholic church in the nation ſhould receive the Lord's ſupper, and to which they ſhould, from time to time, reſort, as the Jews to the altar, is more agreeable, by your argument, to the primary grant, than a congregational one; even as a national aſſembly of rulers for government is more agreeable than a congregational one. But it is ſtill more agreeable to ſuch a catholic grant

grant of ordinances and privileges, that it ſhould fall next upon a congregation, than upon a nation or province. For thus it can be more uniformly obſerved and enjoyed, without any conſideration of the ſizes, and ſhapes, and diſtinctions of nations, and in an exact agreeableneſs unto the obſervance and enjoyment of it in an aſſembly of the whole profeſſors of the name of Chriſtian faith: ſo that, in ſeeing any one of theſe congregations, we may ſee the ſame things that we ſhould ſee if the univerſality of profeſſors were aſſembled for the obſervance of all ordinances, and the enjoyment of all church-privileges; and the ſame things that we ſhould ſee, if we ſhould go through all the churches upon the face of the earth, an aſſembly of the ſame kind, the ſame ſort of members, the ſame ordinances of worſhip, the ſame church-officers, the ſame order and diſcipline, and the myſtical body of Chriſt ſhewed forth in the ſame manner. I own this is the moſt beautiful view I can have of the catholic church, according to your notion, and according to what you ſay, of the grant of all ordinances and church-privileges being made primarily to that catholic body. And I ſee not that your argument can indeed prove any thing, if it be not this, that there can be no church but a congregation, unleſs the univerſality of profeſſors could aſſemble together for obſerving all goſpel-ordinances, and enjoying all church-privileges; and that would ſtill be no more but a congregation.

3. The ſcriptural unity or oneneſs of theſe churches, and of the catholic church, no way favours provincial and national ſynods, and the ſubordination of judicatures, and can be no foundation for them. Your catholic viſible body united, and under one viſible catholic government, I believe not; ſeeing it is not a proper object of faith, as not being revealed, and as being an object of ſenſe, yet never ſeen by any. I acknowledge freely to you; I have not underſtanding enough for the viſible union of this body that you contend for, except you could make one viſible paſtor and biſhop, or unanimous college of biſhops, over all the paſtors and congregations in the world, and one viſible place of worſhip for the whole body to reſort unto.

The ſcripture gives me ſome notion of the unity of the catholic church, the church of the firſt-born, which is deſcribed Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24. Rom. xii. 4. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 12. 13. Eph. i. 10. 22. 23. Eph. ii. 5. 6. 16.—21. Eph. iv. 4. 5. 6. 15. 16. I alſo ſee the Apoſtle accommodating his doctrine of the unity of that holy catholic church, the myſtical body of Chriſt,

Chriſt, unto a viſible church, a congregation of ſaints, wherein that catholic body is ſhewed forth, and exhorting the members, in their ſeveral ſtations, to walk according to it, and ſhew it forth, Eph. ii. 22. Rom. xii. 6.—10. Eph. iv. 1. 2. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 27.; and ſo I likewiſe underſtand the viſible unity of a viſible church or congregation of the ſaints, ſhewing the holy catholic unity in the aſſembling of themſelves together ſtedfaſtly, and with one accord, for the obſervation of all the ordinances of Chriſt, according to his word, and particularly the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. x. 15.—18.

I alſo perceive, that in every congregation of the ſaints obſerving the word of Chriſt, the unity of the catholic body is viſible; ſo every one of theſe churches, in the open obſervation of the word of Chriſt, wherein his authority is viſible, and which is one for them all, is as like another, as one copy of your book is like another, or like the whole impreſſion: ſo that, when I have the copy now before me, I have your book, and have no occaſion for gathering together the whole impreſſion. Thus the church in Theſſalonica was one with the churches in Judea, in the obſervation of that word, "which wrought effectually in them, when they received it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God," 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. That word which was then delivered to them by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, and which we have now in the ſcripture of the New Teſtament, was as the ſeal, and a church in Judea, and another in the city of Theſſalonica, as two impreſſions of the ſame ſeal. And as this word, when duly received and obſerved, will make the churches one and uniform every where, ſo there is an oneneſs and uniformity in the oppoſition to it every where; as our Lord has abundantly foretold, and as is manifeſt from 1 Theſſ. ii. 14.

As any church, then, is more or leſs viſibly conformed to that word of Jeſus Chriſt, the only uniting head and lawgiver of the church, it has more or leſs of the true viſible oneneſs and uniformity of churches. And though there ſhould be but one church in the world viſibly obſerving that word, that church has the true catholic viſible unity and uniformity. As it is the duty of the diſciples of Chriſt every where, to conform themſelves to that word, wherein his authority is viſible, and that as they ſhall be anſwerable to him their Judge, Lawgiver, and King, to whom every one of them muſt give an account of himſelf; ſo it is the duty of every church to bring up itſelf viſibly to that word in all things wherein

wherein it comes ſhort of it, and to purge itſelf from every thing diſagreeable to that word, and ſo to come to the catholic unity and uniformity: otherwiſe no particular church could be condemned or approven by him the Lawgiver and Judge, for obſerving or not obſerving that unity.

And, what more can be ſaid of the catholic viſible unity of churches, I know not, unleſs I turn myſelf to the catholic unity and uniformity that took place in the Roman empire, after the congregations of the ſaints were firſt corrupted by the myſtery of iniquity working in them, or to ſomething near a-kin to that, and much of the ſame kind. And, what ſhould make you point to the Roman empire, in the beginning of your argument upon this head, p. 263. I know not, except it be to turn our eyes there, that we may behold your oneneſs of the catholic church viſible in perfection. But againſt all that unity and uniformity, and every thing that pertains to it, and comes of it, the Lord Chriſt will ſet himſelf, to conſume it "by the ſpirit of his mouth," till he deſtroy it utterly "by the brightneſs of his" ſecond "coming."

Yet men will be ſaying ſomething in favour of what remains of it, after ſomething of it is conſumed away, and propoſing wiſe ſchemes of their own, for yet keeping all the churches in viſible unity. As when one or more churches depart from the goſpel unity and uniformity, what ſhould remedy that evil? Is not a catholic aſſembly of rulers appointed, or ought it not to be appointed, as moſt meet and neceſſary for this? And if it ought to be ordained, certainly it was, unleſs we would reflect on the wiſdom of Jeſus Chriſt.

To this I anſwer, The wiſdom of man is fooliſhneſs with him; and if one church or more churches depart from the goſpel-unity, he charges this evil upon the church that ſo departs, and not upon any other, nor upon the rulers of other churches, whom he commends, if they do right, let another church do never ſo wrong; and he calls the erring church to reform and return; which if it do not, he will chaſtiſe it, or caſt it off, according as it deſerves, and that viſibly. There was a care of the churches in the firſt formation of them, and in the laying of the plan of them, by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; in whoſe place, as to all that is beyond the buſineſs of paſtors and teachers, the churches now have the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, unto which no apoſtle or prophet, though now on the earth, could add any thing, not ſo much as an infallible explication, which would be a new revela-

tion, under the pain of the adding to him of the plagues written in that book; ſo that there is no more uſe for theſe apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; and we cannot deſire them now, without ſetting at nought the work already done by them, and contemning the New-Teſtament revelation, now completed, as being inſufficient.

But if it be yet inquired, May there not be a common overſeer, or company of overſeers, taking care, according to the beſt of their knowledge in the ſcriptures, that the word be ſo obſerved in all the churches, as they may be one, and uniform according to it, in ſubjection to their common overſight and juriſdiction? to this the head of the church anſwers, "I walk in the midſt of the golden candleſticks, I "hold the ſtars in my right hand." And if any man be not ſatisfied in this anſwer, let him ſeek another in the place of it; and I could direct him where to find it in perfection, if he be content to take up with antichriſt inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt.

But while men are ſeeking to eſtabliſh the viſible unity that you are contending for, unto the remedying of evils in ſome churches, or in any one church, they do not conſider, that they are engaged in the ſupport of that thing that ſerved unto the corruption of all the churches, and their falling away from the true unity and uniformity. And after this univerſal falling away has taken place, and the churches are not fully recovered from it, no church can poſſibly be recovered, and bring itſelf up to the true ſcriptural viſible unity, while it cleaves to that unity you contend for, and while it departs not from it. Thus, I am of opinion, the nature of the ſcriptural catholic unity is ſo far from being a noble foundation for the ſubordination of judicatures, that it cannot ſtand with it.

4. The gift of officers for perfecting and edifying the body of Chriſt in the ſcriptural account of it, gives no ſupport to the ſubordination of judicatures, but unto congregations. Your argument, p. 88. to prove that this gift was not made to congregations, will, with equal evidence, manifeſt, that it was not made to your catholic viſible body; for you ſay, "Chriſt gave unto her apoſtles, who cannot be ſaid to be a "deed of gift to particular congregations, their commiſſion "extending to the whole world." And the whole world is of greater extent than even your viſible body itſelf. But that we may have a view of this gift or grant of officers, and the body to which it is made, let us conſider that 4th chapter of the

the epiſtle to the Epheſians, and that they may well ſerve for a key to Rom. xii. and 1 Cor. xii. You ſometimes acknowledge, that the body, for the perfecting and edifying of which Chriſt gave apoſtles, &c. is the inviſible church; and, whether you acknowledge it or not, it is very manifeſt, that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the myſtical body of Chriſt, with application unto the flock at Epheſus, wherein that body was ſhewed forth, and of no ſuch body as that you contend for. He ſpeaks of that body which is animated by one ſpirit, the Holy Ghoſt; has one Lord and Head, Jeſus Chriſt, in union with whom, as the head, it is all growing unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and one Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all; and ſo it is the church of the firſt-born. This is that church that is called in one hope, even the hope of the heavenly inheritance, and hath one faith and knowledge of the Son of God, wherein it is growing unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and ſo it is that church which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all. This then is that body into which we are baptized with one baptiſm, in the name of God, the Father of it, and in the name of the Son, its head, and in the name of the Holy Ghoſt, the Spirit that animates it. For the perfecting and edifying this body, the Lord and Head of it gave gifts unto men, Eph. iv. 10. 11. 12. 13. "He gave ſome apoſtles, and "ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and "teachers." The end for which he gave theſe is twofold.

1*ſt*, "For the perfecting of the ſaints," πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, for the joining together of the ſaints; or as you, I think, very well expreſs it, "For bringing in to joint "the ſaints." This is the ſame thing that had been declared by the Apoſtle, chap. i. 10. ii. 6. 15. 19. and iii. 5. 6. 7. The firſt work about that body, whereof the firſt-born from the dead, Jeſus Chriſt, is the head, and which is made up of ſaints, is the joining of it together. For this end, he that was raiſed from the dead, and ſet on the right hand, and given to be head over all things to the church, gave apoſtles and prophets; and the evangeliſts miniſtered unto them in that great work of gathering both Jews and Gentiles together, with the ſaints in heaven, in one in Chriſt Jeſus; and of the firſt formation of the viſible churches of the ſaints, which are for the ſake of that myſtical body, and ſerve to ſhew it forth till it appear; and therefore the Apoſtle, both here and Rom. xii. and 1 Cor. xii. accommodates what he ſays of that

glorious body unto ſuch churches. So the Lord Chriſt gave apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, for the joining together of the body of Chriſt, and the work of the miniſtry; for it is certain the evangeliſts are called the apoſtles miniſters, Acts xiii. 5. 2 Tim. iv. 5.

2*dly*, The other end for which Chriſt gave theſe gifts, is the edifying of this body, thus formed, till it be perfected; "for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come, "in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son "of God, unto a perfect man." This ſuppoſes the formation of the body of Chriſt, which was by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts; for it behoved the body firſt to be, before it be edified; wherefore the Apoſtle now calls it the body of Chriſt, when he ſpeaks of this edifying. This body is edified by the adding of the elect unto it, till they all be brought in, and by their growing up in it unto perfection, till they all be perfected in one; which edifying is ſome way ſhewed forth in the adding of believers to the churches of the ſaints, which is called adding to the Lord, and in their viſible growth together in faith and love, and in the profeſſed expectation of the coming of Chriſt, 2 Theſ. i. For this work of edifying the body of Chriſt, he gave paſtors and teachers, who muſt continue to the end, becauſe their work continues; and they were by the apoſtles, and their miniſters, planted in every church of the ſaints, and there ſet as a light in a golden candleſtick, to ſhine, and ſo to edify the body of Chriſt.

The Apoſtle, on this ſubject of the gift of officers, for joining together, and edifying Chriſt's body, cites the 68th pſalm, where there is a glorious deſcription of the Lord's aſcenſion, and his receiving gifts for men, and of the erection and advancement of his kingdom by the gifts: and, among other things there ſpoke of, I find ſpecial notice taken of the congregations: for, when the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the glorious marches of the King of the church, in the ſending of the rod of his ſtrength out of Zion, the true ſanctuary, the fountain of Iſrael, for making a willing people to himſelf among all the kingdoms of the world, that he might reign in the midſt of his enemies; and when he ſets forth the variety of gifts and offices accompanying theſe goings or marches of his, under the figure of the Old-Teſtament muſic, ℣ 25. he then ſays, "Bleſs ye the Lord in the congregations," ℣ 26. And I remember you once ſpoke to me with pleaſure of the application of the 27th verſe, by a certain author, unto the apoſtles. And it is remarkable, that thoſe very tribes are mentioned

mentioned of which they were: Paul was of Benjamin; and the brethren of the Lord, James, the Lord's brother, Gal. i. 19. and others of his brethren, 1 Cor. ix. 5. were of Judah; and the Galileans were of Zebulun and Naphtali, Matth. iv. 12. to 16. 18. Now, both the thing pointed at in the 24th and 25th verſes, and the thing pointed at in the 27th verſe, ſeems plainly to have a reference to the congregations; and I know not but they may be the holy places mentioned ℣ 35. And, truly, when I conſider the uſe that was made of the congregations of the ſaints in the ſetting up and advancing of Chriſt's kingdom by the gifts he received for men, I have ſome ground to think, that the New Teſtament makes us underſtand what is ſaid in this pſalm of the congregations. For, as the word of the Lord, his mighty voice, the rod of his ſtrength, ℣ 36. and Pſal. cx. 2. was ſent out by him from Jeruſalem on earth, the figure of the true, and from the glorious true heavenly ſanctuary above, the fountain of Iſrael, the true temple; ſo it was ſent forth from the congregations of the ſaints, in every one of which, the heavenly Jeruſalem, the church of the firſt-born written in heaven, is ſhewed forth, and made ſome way viſible.

When our Lord gave commiſſion to his apoſtles, and aſcended up from them, he left them in the firſt congregation of his own gathering; and when they had continued for ſome time with that congregation in prayer with one accord, and Matthias was put in the place of Judas, and, together with the eleven, choſen unto the overſight of that congregation, he poured down the Holy Ghoſt upon them in that congregation; and from thence went forth the word of the Lord with power in Jeruſalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt part of the earth. There was a congregation gathered at Antioch of the Gentiles; Paul and Barnabas, and others with them, prophets and teachers, are in that congregation, and there they are ſent forth unto the great work of the converſion of the idolatrous Gentile world, and of bringing preſents to Chriſt from the kings of the earth, and of making the Gentiles of all lands ſtretch out the hand to God, and the kingdoms of the earth ſing unto the Lord. In order to this, there was firſt a congregation or church of the ſaints raiſed at Antioch, by the word that came out of the firſt congregation; and from this at Antioch the rod of Chriſt's ſtrength went forth gloriouſly, for the joining together of the ſaints, and making the Gentiles fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body with the Jews. And it is remarkable, that the apoſtles,

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as they were recommended by the brethren in the churches unto the grace of God in their work, and ſought their earneſt wreſtlings together for them in that work, ſo they gave them an account of their progreſs in it from time to time, Acts xiv. 26. 27. and God was glorified in the congregations, becauſe of his goings, Acts xi. 18.; and where-ever the goſpel had ſucceſs, there they took care to raiſe a congregation, and there was a new place of quartering, and from thence again founded out the word of God, 1 Theſ. i. 8.; and by them the apoſtles, and other preachers of the goſpel through the world, were ſuſtained, 1 Cor. ix. Phil. iv. 15. 16. 3 John *&c.* When the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, had finiſhed their work, they left the world, and theſe congregations in it, with paſtors and teachers for edifying the body of Chriſt now joined together, and left that work in the hands of the paſtors and teachers of theſe congregations, who have a commiſſion to "preach the goſpel to every creature," and to "teach all nations." But the viſible church, of which they were left overſeers, is no other but the flock among them, and unto which they are examples, that is, their congregation.

With theſe congregations the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament were left, and were preſerved in them till the new Babyloniſh captivity; which came about by reaſon of their departing from that bleſſed rule laid down to them in theſe ſcriptures by the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, and ſeeking unto themſelves another method of union than that word; and when the wiſdom of man came in the room of that word, and the power of the kingdoms of this world in the room of the glorious rod of Chriſt's ſtrength, and the heavenly power of his kingdom, then the Lord's enemies "roared in the "midſt of his congregations, and ſet up their enſigns for "ſigns, and brake down the carved work."

But, after the Lord has, by his marvellous providence, preſerved his word during the Babyloniſh captivity, and, by bringing it to the open view of the nations in their own languages, and by the gifts beſtowed upon men for the preaching of it, begun to conſume "the man of ſin" now of a long time, you are yet highly offended that any in the place of the world where you live, ſhould come out of Babylon, and return to the congregations of the ſaints, there to cleave to the truly uniting word of the apoſtles and prophets, in oppoſition to that dividing and deſolating mean of union that was ſet up in the place of it: and you make a great clamour

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about a deed of gift of officers given to a catholic church or body of Chriſt, for which there is no foundation in the word of God, by which the only body of Chriſt yet viſible that has a claim to that gift is a congregation of the ſaints. And however ſmall and deſpiſed theſe congregations may be any where in the eyes of them that ſay, "What do theſe feeble "Jews? will they revive the ſtones out of the heaps of the "rubbiſh? Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he "ſhall even break down their ſtone wall:" yet their Redeemer is ſtrong, and able thoroughly to plead their cauſe: "He "will not forget the congregation of his poor for ever, nor "will he forget the voice of his enemies, the tumult of thoſe "that riſe up againſt them."

II. You next argue for the ſubordination of judicatures, from Matth. xviii. which is as clear againſt it as any of the words that began to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf while on earth.

Here, becauſe our Lord ſays, that our carriage towards a treſpaſſing brother not hearing the church ſhould be as that of the Jews towards Heathens, you take occaſion to cant over a deal of ſtuff about the Jewiſh church, of which I have ſaid ſomething to you before; but as your inferences from theſe words, which do no way refer to the order of the Jewiſh church, nor to the manner of their excommunication, are the wideſt that can be thought of, ſo I reſt ſatisfied in the apoſtolic explication of them, 1 Cor. v. 11. compared with Acts x. 28. & xi. 3.; and pity you, putting yourſelf to the trouble of ſearching after, and taking heed to all the Jewiſh traditions or fables about excommunication, having no foundation in the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, and from them eſtabliſhing a rule to yourſelf. And when you alledge, that your ſcheme of government was in the Jewiſh church, and that every thing elſe but it in the order of that church is aboliſhed, and that it is moral; you might as well make no pretence about the Jewiſh church, and eſtabliſh your ſubordination of judicatures upon right reaſon and nature's light, as does the defender of national churches: for it is your right reaſon that tells you what is moral in this caſe, and what not, and nothing elſe that I know of. I muſt ſay, you diſcover a ſtrength of imagination, when you find every ſtep of the Lord's law about offences, Matth. xviii. in the order of the Jewiſh church.

That the Jews were bound to reprove one another for ſin, there is no queſtion; but how you find the ſecond degree of admonition

admonition before witneſſes in theſe texts, that ordained facts to be proved in judgment by them that were witneſſes unto theſe facts, and that one witneſs could not bring any man to death, two or three being neceſſary, I cannot eaſily imagine, there being nothing like admonition in the caſe, nor deſiſting upon the treſpaſſer's hearing. And for the admoniſhing of offenders, that goes before the ſentence; you might as well have brought any texts to prove it to have been the ſame thing with what was injoined under the Old Teſtament: and as to what was injoined under the Old Teſtament, if a treſpaſs was committed for which the law appointed a man to be cut off, there was no ſparing of him upon his hearkening to any admonition; and when the prieſts, Levites, and judges, that ſat in the place which the Lord choſe, paſſed ſentence in a matter too hard for judges in the cities, (not the rulers of the ſynagogue), "in a matter between blood and "blood, plea and plea, ſtroke and ſtroke;" and if any man rebelled againſt that ſentence, it behoved him to die, or be cut off. Is this any thing like a church's admonition to a brother, manifeſted to be a treſpaſſer by witneſſes? which admonition, if he hear it, gains him ſo as no cenſure can be inflicted upon him, any more than if he had never treſpaſſed.

You find next an alluſion unto the firſt degree of excommunication among the Jews, in the binding of an obſtinate treſpaſſer, and counting him as an Heathen; but becauſe this firſt degree of excommunication is not to be found in Moſes's law, you go to your Jewiſh traditions for this. And ſhall I believe, that the New-Teſtament Lawgiver brought his law from theſe? No queſtion he is preſent with every one of his churches, and confirms what they do in his name, no leſs than in the Old-Teſtament church and ſanhedrim; but will this make it appear, that this law of his was tranſcribed from Moſes's law, and that hereby he deſigned to give us the conſtitution of that church over again? While you attend ſo much to the Jews, and cite them even as you do the Old Teſtament itſelf, I think you will be altogether inexcuſable, when you hear them complaining of the neglect of the rule, Matth. xviii. as one of the grounds of the Lord's deſtroying their city; if you, that own the authority of our Law-giver, live in the neglect of it, or continue in ſuch circumſtances as wherein you cannot practiſe it, and the more that you draw arguments from it for the ſupport of the ſociety wherein it cannot be obſerved.

There is a ground laid for your arguings from Matth. xviii. *viz.*

viz. That Chriſt has here granted power to the overſeers or elders of a congregation, two or more, to bind and looſe in his name. Here, then, before we go further, this is evident in the text; or elſe your reaſonings upon it, both as to the rule of proportion and the Jewiſh ſynagogue, fall to the ground; and you alſo prove it, chap. 5. § 2. from this text. And this being agreed upon betwixt us, I preſume to offer you a few queſtions upon it; as,

1. Seeing I hear not of two kinds of preſbyteries in the New Teſtament, and the word *preſbytery* is but once uſed with reſpect to the Chriſtian conſtitution, and when uſed with reſpect to the Jewiſh, ſignifies their ſupreme court, Luke xxii. 66. and Acts xxii. 6. tell me, if this be the ſcripture-preſbytery or not? Certainly the binding and looſing preſbytery, according to you, muſt anſwer unto the Jewiſh preſbytery; and the preſbytery in this text, or the two or three or more elders, you alledge, has the triple teſtimony and promiſe brought over from the ſupreme court among the Jews to confirm the cenſures. Is this court, then, the elderſhip of a congregation, the court that is called *a preſbytery* in the New Teſtament? and is the triple teſtimony and promiſe that was made to the ſupreme Jewiſh court, called *the preſbytery*, given unto this court, or not?

2. Have theſe two or more pointed at in the text any power here given them to bind or looſe by plurality of votes, or only by agreement? I think you have ſome way anſwered this already, when you are declaring the import of meeting and acting in Chriſt's name, p. 608. place 5.; and ſo you deſtroy the binding and looſing which is by plurality of voices, ſeeing the grant of power, and promiſe of concurrence, is only to them agreeing, and no otherwiſe: thus no deed can be done by them without coming to agreement.

3. Have the two or more, as many more as you pleaſe, any power here granted to them to bind or looſe in Chriſt's name any where but in the church, and with the conſent of the church, even the flock which they overſee, "not as lords "over God's heritage, but as enſamples to the flock?" Shew me from this text that they have; ſhew me an inſtance of it in the New Teſtament; and, till you be able to do this, you may ſpare your pains in proving, that the rule and government of the church is in the hands of the elders, which I never denied. But the queſtion betwixt you and me being about the nature of that power of binding and looſing, and the manner of its exerciſe, and whether it muſt be exerciſed

in a church conſiſting of brethren, (which is the place that the Lord hath choſen, and where he is preſent), and with the conſent of that church, your buſineſs is to let me ſee, that it can be otherwiſe exerciſed, by any precept or example in the New Teſtament.

You need not here tune up the old ſong about women and children, except you have a mind to divert me. You muſt firſt prove, that the infant ſeed of believing parents are, by baptiſm, members of any viſible church, and that they belong unto any ſuch church, whereof their parent is a member, any otherwiſe than as they are accounted the ſame thing with their parent. And as to women, you muſt be determined by your ſenſe of 1 Cor. xiv. whatever it be: and if you find them there debarred from all ſpeaking in the church, and alſo, ſeeing there are other ways of ſignifying conſent or diſſent than ſpeech, from any other way of ſignifying it; then you will ſay, that the whole church, as far as it is capable, according to the word, *conſents*. And I ſhall not condemn you for cleaving as cloſe as you can to the ſcripture. You may alſo thus debar them from ſinging of pſalms, that being one manner of ſpeaking words; ſaying *Amen*; profeſſing repentance in caſe of public ſcandal; and voting in the call of their overſeers; and ſo none of your heretrixes and liferentreſſes will have power of voting. But if you underſtand it of praying and preaching, or exerciſing any ſuch gift for edification only, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in the context; then you muſt let the two or three judge, with the conſent of the women alſo: for I do not think you will eaſily exclude them in theſe words, "If thy brother treſpaſs."

You meaſure a congregation of the ſaints, both men and women, by one of your pariſhes, and the generality of people in them; and the exerciſe of Chriſt's diſcipline in one of his churches, by the exerciſe of that diſcipline which takes place in your eccleſiaſtic courts; for which no man is ſufficient, without that wiſdom of this world which is plainly excluded the churches of Chriſt by his law: and you ſpeak accordingly about the ability of the brethren in a church, to conſent to or diſſent from the judgment of their elders, in their preſence and hearing, as to the mind of Chriſt in his word, touching a caſe that happens among them, wherein their practice, in obedience to the Lord's commandment of love, in ſubjection to which they are walking, is moſt nearly concerned. And ſo you do indeed declare them incapable to know, how to give obedience to the Lord's law of brotherly

therly love, and with whom they are to walk in the duties of that love, and with whom not. And this is one inſtance of the Antichriſtian arrogancy of the clergy. But if you reckon the people church-members, whoſe fault is it that they are ignorant of the manifeſt laws of Chriſt, upon which alone, and not upon doubtful diſputations, binding and looſing muſt proceed? And by what warrant have you members of a church that are obſtinately ignorant of the law of brotherly love, and of what pertains to it in a church?

As to your argument from the rule of proportion, I am not ſatisfied by it, unleſs you could let me ſee,

1. That the caſe is the ſame betwixt two or more churches, as it is betwixt brethren in the ſame church, or brethren Chriſtians; and that the Lord Chriſt commands a church, or many churches, and their overſeers, to do the ſame thing toward another church, as ſuch, that he commandeth them to do toward their own members. I find churches charged every one with what is wrong within themſelves; but I do not find them condemned for what is amiſs in other churches, if they themſelves be free.

2. That there is an inſtitution for the court, that is, to bind churches when they tranſgreſs, and will not hear other churches. You have not manifeſted to me any ſuch thing in this text: for, when you ſay our Lord here refers to the ſynagogue, which was but a congregation, and to its rulers; and when you alledge, that the ſame grant and promiſe is made to the court here ſpoke of that was before made to the ſupreme court among the Jews, a congregational preſbytery is hereby made the ſupreme court. You may as well plead for the binding of kingdoms and commonwealths as for the binding of churches from theſe words, "Whatſoever ye ſhall bind;" and if you extend it further than unto all matters wherein a church is warranted by Chriſt to bind or looſe its members, you may as well make it to ſignify every thing in the world. And though two or more elders, as many more as you will, be here authoriſed, by agreement, to bind or looſe in a church, even the church whereof they are overſeers, not as lords over God's heritage, but as enſamples to the flock; yet it will take a depth of metaphyſics that I never fathomed, to infer from this, that Chriſt hath authoriſed any number of elders any otherwiſe aſſembled, or judging in any other manner, to bind or looſe in his name. It cannot be manifeſted, that theſe words, as they ſtand in connection with what goes before, "For where two or three are gathered toge-

" ther in my name, there am I in the midſt of them," do warrant elders, more or fewer, to meet together as they pleaſe, in as many different kinds of courts as they will, and bind and looſe: for it will not be eaſily proven, that meeting in a court not of his inſtitution, is meeting in his name: and if theſe words be to be taken more largely than with a reference to what was ſaid before of the elderſhip of a congregation, then it is agreeable to the context, when we are taking them more largely, firſt to think of two or three brethren or church-members meeting together to do his will, and call on his name for any thing wherein his glory is concerned, and which he has allowed them to aſk; and there is no reaſon to confine it unto elders, as you do, when yet you plead for the text being underſtood in a latitude whereof it will not admit.

I am ſatisfied the law of Chriſt binds every profeſſor of his name to aſſemble in a church to his power, for the obſervation of his inſtitutions: and ſo every ſuch perſon is by him ſubjected to his diſcipline in that church whereof he is a member, and the elders of ſuch a church are commanded to take heed to themſelves, as well as to all the flock, and that with reſpect unto all treſpaſſes, the moſt public and hainous not excepted; and there is the ſame rule of diſcipline for a treſpaſſing elder and any other church-member. And when any the leaſt church warrantably binds or looſes its members, one or more, it is good in heaven, without being ratified by any other church or judicature on earth whatſoever; and when a church binds or looſes without warrant in Chriſt's law for ſo doing, it is of itſelf null as if it never had been, and cannot be made good by the ratification of a judicature conſiſting of all the elders on earth.

But if a church treſpaſs againſt Chriſt's law, then he judges and chaſtens that church, and calls it by his word to reform; and if it do not reform, where is the court, having juriſdiction, that he hath inſtituted for the reformation of ſuch a church, as the church in Corinth for inſtance? If a church perſiſt obſtinately in ſin, ſo as not to anſwer unto the end of Chriſt's inſtitution of a church, what court is it that then caſts off that church from being a church of Chriſt? inform me, if you find it in the New Teſtament. I ſee the elderſhip of a church, with the church's conſent, may caſt off their members; but for what I can ſee, Jeſus Chriſt has taken both the chaſtening and caſting off of churches into his own hand; and this is manifeſt in the caſe of the ſeven churches of Aſia. If you will not be content with this, but ſtill think viſible church-

power

power acting over many churches neceſſary for remedying ſome evils that you are much afraid of, ſo that you cannot truſt them in the hands of Chriſt, who has taken the churches under his immediate care, I would then have you ſeriouſly to conſider the evils that not only may follow, but have actually followed upon the exerciſe of a viſible power over the churches, to keep them from hainous treſpaſſes, and in unity and peace.

III. Your other ground for the ſubordination of judicatures, *viz.* the apoſtolical example, Acts xv. is as clear a pattern for the congregational way, and ſo againſt the ſubordination of judicatures, as is to be found in any one paſſage in the whole book of the Acts: and the more I conſider that paſſage, I wonder the more how it comes to be ſo much inſiſted on as a pattern for a ſynod of any kind, either Roman, Scottiſh, or New Engliſh.

When you conſider and anſwer what I ſay on this paſſage in my remarks on *The Defence of national churches*, and in my ſpeech before the commiſſion, I will know better how to deal with you upon it, and where your main pinch lies. But, as I can now take you, in the difference betwixt you and me about the nature of this court, you ſeem to depend much in your belief of its being a ſynodical meeting, upon your ſenſe of the word *church*, as it ſtands in this chapter, and upon this, that Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe that came with them from the church in Antioch, were members of that company by which the decrees were ordained. When the queſtion is, Whether this was a congregational or a ſynodical meeting? it is manifeſt, very much depends upon the ſenſe of the word *church*, or what we are to underſtand by it here: and if this remain doubtful, after all that can be ſaid upon it, the caſe is doubtful; but if it can be clearly manifeſted what is the meaning of the church here, it will do much to determine the queſtion. It is very plain the church is diſtinguiſhed from the elders, as the elders are from the apoſtles; ſo that by *the church* you and I will agree to underſtand ſomething elſe than the elders in Jeruſalem, or the preſbytery of the church in Jeruſalem, who ſay to Paul, Acts xxi. 18. 25. "We have "written and concluded:" for, as I can take your meaning, you would have us by *the church* to underſtand *the commiſſioners from Antioch*, and *from Syria*, and *Cilicia*, church-officers that met with the preſbytery of Jeruſalem.

Now let us conſider all the evidence that can enter our minds from this paſſage, and ſee if it can poſſibly bear this meaning.

meaning. It is plain, the only commiſſioners we read of here are Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe with them from Antioch; and whether theſe, or any other commiſſioners you may dream of from other places, be or can be intended in this deſignation, we may ſee by conſidering the whole paſſage. We find the church, and the apoſtles and elders, receiving the commiſſioners from the church in Antioch, Acts xv. 4. and if this be the ſame church that concurred with the apoſtles and elders in deciding the queſtion, and ſending the epiſtle and meſſengers to Antioch, then it will be evident beyond contradiction, that Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from Antioch, were not of that church. If it be not the ſame church that ſent the epiſtle to Antioch, then let me ſee what occurs in this chapter to afford me any ſhadow of a ground to think that it is not; mean time it muſt be acknowledged, that the church in ℣ 4. is the church in Jeruſalem under the overſight of the preſbytery there. We find the whole church, with the apoſtles and elders, ℣ 22.; and it is manifeſt this church, whatever it was, concurred with the apoſtles in their deciſion of the queſtion, and ordaining the decrees written in the letter to Antioch. I make no doubt to agree with you in ſaying, that *the whole church* there is the ſame thing with *the brethren* in whoſe name the epiſtle was written, ℣ 23. Neither do I queſtion, that this *whole church* is there where *the whole multitude* is ſpoke of, ℣ 12.

Now this whole church, this company of brethren, was a company to which the account of the miracles and wonders God had done among the Gentiles by Paul and Barnabas was news, and to which the diſturbance made at Antioch by the falſe teachers and their doctrine was known only by hearſay, and that from Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from Antioch, ℣ 12. 23. 24. "All the multitude gave audience to "Paul and Barnabas, declaring what miracles, *&c.* The a-"poſtles, and elders, and brethren ſend greeting.—Foraſ-"muchas we have heard, that certain—have troubled you "with words," *&c.* The whole church, or the brethren, with the apoſtles and elders, are a company from which the falſe teachers went out, that troubled the brethren in Antioch and other places, and raiſed the queſtion which occaſioned the coming up of the commiſſioners, and cauſed this meeting, ℣ 23. 24. "The apoſtles, and elders, and brethren "ſend—unto the brethren—in Antioch, and Syria, and "Cilicia. Foraſmuchas—certain which went out from us "have troubled you with words,—to whom we gave no "ſuch

" ſuch commandment." The whole church, or the brethren, with the apoſtles and elders, are Jews, plainly diſtinguiſhing themſelves from the brethren which are of the Gentiles, even thoſe in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, ℣ 23. "The " apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, ſend unto the brethren " which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Ci- " licia." The whole church, or the brethren with the apoſtles and elders, is a company expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from Paul and Barnabas, commiſſioners from Antioch, and ſending men of themſelves meſſengers to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, and with the letter, for greater ſecurity to tell them the ſame things by mouth, ℣ 22. " Then pleaſed it the " apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen " men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and " Barnabas," *&c.*

Now, Sir, draw the concluſion yourſelf, and ſay, whether the whole church here diſtinguiſhed from the preſbytery of Jeruſalem be the commiſſioners from Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, or the church under the overſight of the elders in Jeruſalem? and then I will know whether you have the regard you pretend to ſcripture-conſequences, when I try you upon a conſequence the neareſt and ſhorteſt you can eaſily deſire; yea, I will know your regard to plain ſcripture-words.

You make no queſtion but Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of the church in Antioch that came with them, were members of that company by which the decrees were ordained, and gave their ſuffrage in what was determined, as a part of that eccleſiaſtic body. And it is worth notice how you make up this eccleſiaſtic body: " There is a clear diſcovery," ſay you, " of the members conſtitutive of this ſynod, in order to " conſider the queſtion referred to them,——namely, from " the preſbyterial church of Jeruſalem, the apoſtles and pref- " byters, ℣ 6.; from the church of Antioch Paul and Bar- " nabas, and others ſent with them by the public authority " of that church, ℣ 2. 12." Thus to make it look as like one of your ſynods as may be, you ſpeak as if you imagined, that the apoſtles and elders ſat there as delegates from the preſbytery in Jeruſalem, and ſo were on the ſame footing with thoſe from Antioch; or at leaſt, you would have your reader imagine ſo. But it ſeems very plain, that the preſbytery of Jeruſalem ſat full there, and the apoſtles were with them; and that Paul and Barnabas being ſent up to them with a queſtion, after hearing of it, and ſome diſcourſe in the church

church of Jeruſalem about it, they held a meeting for the purpoſe of deciding it.

Now that Paul and Barnabas were not members of the court that came together to decide this queſtion, and that they were not of that company which ordained the decrees, is to me very clear from theſe words: ℣ 22. "Then it pleaſed the apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend "choſen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul "and Barnabas, Judas ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief "men among the brethren, and wrote letters by them." And the whole ſtrain of the epiſtle diſtinguiſhes Paul and Barnabas evidently from the company by which the dogmas were judged. And though it behoved Paul and Barnabas, and thoſe with them, to be preſent, and propoſe their queſtion, and give information, which they did; yet I can find no mention of their giving any judgment or ſuffrage. I ſee Peter giving his judgment, and James his, and the apoſtles and the elders agreeing, and the whole church concurring with them; but as Paul and Barnabas are not of that company, ſo I find them doing nothing there but informing and narrating matters of fact, without giving any judgment. The uſe they were for in that meeting is intimated in the epiſtle, wherein they at Jeruſalem ſignify to them at Antioch, that they had been duly informed by their meſſengers, and that they had depended on and gone upon their information; and whereas their authority had been attacked by the falſe teachers, they teſtify their regard to them, and approbation of them; and, to remove all ground of ſuſpicion, they ſend men of their own company along with them to Antioch.

From all which there is not the leaſt ground to imagine, that Paul and Barnabas ſat members of that court, and judges in that queſtion there, but the cleareſt ground to think that they did not. And till you prove they gave their ſuffrage in what was determined, as a part of that eccleſiaſtic body, may I not inquire, where is the ſynod in Acts xv. that has been ſo much talked of both by Papiſts and national Proteſtants? Well, ſpeak of a ſynod who will, I reſolve to ſpeak only of the preſbytery in Jeruſalem, where were the apoſtles, in whoſe ſtead we have now the New Teſtament, till once you prove, that Paul and Barnabas were members of that court, and joined with the elders in Jeruſalem in exerciſing juriſdiction over the churches in Jeruſalem and Antioch.

The preſbytery of Jeruſalem then came together, the apoſtles and they, for to conſider of this matter; and how did

they

they come together? or where? the particular place is not mentioned; but Acts xv. makes it evident, they aſſembled in the church, which is the true place that the Lord hath choſen for a New-Teſtament preſbytery, to gather together in his name, to make deciſions, and paſs ſentences in whatever place of the earth it happen to be; and here they have the promiſe of his preſence, "who walks in the midſt of the "golden candleſticks, and holds the ſtars in his right hand." There needs no conſequence be drawn to prove, that the whole church was preſent with their preſbytery at the making of this deciſion; and what is the plaineſt neareſt conſequence from this, but that the whole church in Jeruſalem was but one congregation, and that the preſbytery in Jeruſalem was but the preſbytery of a congregation? Further, How did this preſbytery make this great deciſion? by plurality of voices, or by agreement? with the conſent of the church, or without it? Let the text anſwer, ℣ 22. "Then "pleaſed it the apoſtles and elders, with the whole church."

This was the way the apoſtles proceeded from the beginning, in all their actings in the church at Jeruſalem; they determined all things with the conſent of the people, and did not diſdain to ſatisfy them as to all their conduct, Acts i. Acts vi. Acts xi. 1.—4. So that what was done by them is ſaid to be done by the church, according to Matth. xviii. Acts xi. 22. This was ſo laid in the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, that, however the myſtery of iniquity wrought in the churches before the days of Cyprian, it was not then wrought out of their conſtitution: for he ſays, Epiſt. 6. *Ad clerum de cura pauperum et confeſſorum,—Ad id vero quod ſcripſerunt mihi com-preſbyteri noſtri, Donatus et Fortunatus, Novatus et Gordius, ſolus reſcribere nihil potui; quando a primordio epiſcopatus mei ſtatuerim, nihil ſine conſilio veſtro,* et ſine conſenſu plebis meæ, *privata ſententia gerere. Sed cum ad vos per Dei gratiam venero, tunc de iis quæ vel geſta ſunt, vel gerenda, ſicut honor mutuus poſcit, in commune tractabimus.* He had a very plain pattern for this laid before him by the apoſtles in the church at Jeruſalem: and while men have been diligently inquiring into Acts xv. to find a pattern for a thing for which there is no pattern there, I wonder much, that, from Acts xv. 22. compared with Acts xvi. 4. they have not perceived, that the judgment, or determination, or ſentence of a Chriſtian preſbytery is, "What pleaſes them, with the whole church of "which they are overſeers."

This was the greateſt deciſion we read of in the New Teſtament, the greateſt ſentence or determination that was in any Chriſtian aſſembly where the apoſtles were; and this was the firſt part of the New Teſtament that was committed unto writing, and delivered unto the churches to keep; and in this writing the churches had a copy caſt unto them, in the firſt church, for their method of procedure in all their affairs and manner of judging. Now, if the greateſt deciſion we read of in the New Teſtament, and wherein all the churches were concerned, was made by a congregational preſbytery, or by a congregational church; what is the conſequence of this, but that there is no eccleſiaſtic court on earth above ſuch a church, and ſuch a preſbytery? As to the reaſons why this queſtion was ſent to this church, and determined there, you may ſee my ſpeech before the commiſſion; which, if you conſider, you will ſee, that no conſequence can be drawn from Acts xv. for the juriſdiction of one church over another. Upon the whole, may I not appeal to the conſcience of any unprejudiced perſon, (though indeed there are few ſuch in this matter), whether the pattern Acts xv. eſtabliſhes ſynods and the ſubordination of judicatures, or overthrows them, and eſtabliſhes the congregational way of doing?

I ſhall trouble you no further at this time with obſervations upon your performance; only that your prejudice againſt congregational principles ſeems to me to be this, that, according to them, the Chriſtian religion cannot be national, and laid in the conſtitution of the kingdoms of this world, and a Chriſtian national uniformity cannot be eſtabliſhed unto the cutting off of hereſy and ſchiſm with heretics and ſchiſmatics, by the power of thoſe kingdoms. But, on this very account, theſe principles appear to me to be true Chriſtian principles; and, as to this, I deſire you may take the trouble to read and conſider what I have written on John xviii. 36. 37.

And now, Sir, when you have impartially conſidered what is above ſaid, together with what you find in my former papers, if you ſtill find me miſtaken, pity me, pray for me, and inform me better from the word of God, and I will be obliged to you; and if you conceive, that you have received any perſonal injury from me, convince me of it, and I ſhall endeavour to confeſs my fault, and aſk your forgiveneſs, as I deſire to forgive all you have done or ſaid at any time, or in your book, againſt me. But if you receive any conviction from what I have ſaid, do not ſtifle your convictions, do not reſiſt the truth, nor detain it in unrighteouſneſs. Your

honour,

honour, and the honour of your book, which you may conceive to be by me attacked, and which I am ſure cannot be much hurt by one in my circumſtances, is but a poor thing in compariſon with that honour that cometh from God only. If I have been doing nothing elſe but making ſuch an attack as I am capable to make upon your credit as an author, I own I have been very idle, and very ill employed; but if I have been obliged to undertake this taſk, and give you this trouble, only for the ſake of the truth, and as a debt I owe to the truth, oppoſed by you, then I deſire it may overcome you, as it has done me, that we may be fellow-helpers to the truth; and I am confident your yielding to it will be your honour in the day of the Lord. "That your eye may be "ſingle, and your whole body full of light, and that you "may not be conformed to this world, but transformed by "the renewing of your mind, to prove what is that good, "and acceptable, and perfect will of God; and that his "word may be a light to your feet, and a lamp to your "paths, making you wiſer than your teachers, and affording "you liberty in keeping his precepts," is the prayer of,

SIR,

Your ſincere well-wiſher, and

Dundee, Sept. 9. 1730.

Friend to ſerve you in the Lord,

JOHN GLAS.

A Second Letter to Mr AYTONE. Containing, Remarks upon his *Review of the Obſervations on the Original Conſtitution of the Church.*

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1731.]

Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wiſdom is in them? Jer. viii. 9.

SIR,

I Have ſeen your letter to me ſince it has been printed; and though I am not of the mind that it deſerves an anſwer, which it alſo ſeems to forbid, and though I have little hope that any thing coming from my pen can have influence upon your underſtanding; yet, not knowing but ſome good end may be reached, even upon you, by the reply I am now making, I have therefore undertaken this taſk; and, in the performance of it, though I cannot promiſe upon myſelf, yet I wiſh I may be preſerved from every thing that may unjuſtly provoke you, and ſo mar the end I have in view.

My principles touching Chriſt's inſtitution of a viſible church, and the plan laid down to us in the New Teſtament, were fairly ſtated, and their foundation in the New Teſtament from which they were taken, was plainly pointed out in *The explication of the propoſition.* The ſcheme of principles there laid down, though it contains the main ſubſtance, and the beſt of that for which thoſe called *Independents* contended of old, againſt them that are called *Preſbyterians*; yet is not liable to all the objections that were framed by the Preſbyterians againſt the Independents; nor is it capable of all the conſequences that were drawn formerly from the manner of maintaining the congregational ſcheme, or from the conceſſions made by the Independent writers. Yet the author of *The defence of national churches*, and you after him, have taken that Independent ſcheme as it was the theſis formerly impugned by your writers, as anſwering beſt unto the common arguments. But I, not finding myſelf concerned to maintain any other ſcheme of principles but my own, nor to anſwer for conſequences drawn from any other poſitions or conceſſions

conceſſions but my own, gave my thoughts as briefly and clearly as I could upon thoſe common objections, only as they ſeemed to me to lie againſt what had been by me advanced. And this I did in my remarks on *The defence of national churches*; wherein, though I treated with ridicule ſome things that are truly ridiculous in that defence, and in the paper intitled, *The naked truth*; yet I laid down ſufficient grounds for anſwers unto all the objections againſt my principles that I have yet ſeen: ſo that I am convinced, if you had ſeriouſly conſidered what is there offered, a great part of your book might have been ſpared. But your book gave me occaſion to ſpeak more particularly and fully, what I had ſaid with more brevity before, and to ſhow where the proof fails in arguings, that ſeemed to have any foundation in ſcripture, and likewiſe how croſs theſe arguings are to the ſcriptures, and even to ſome principles maintained by yourſelves.

When I publiſhed my *Remarks on the defence of national churches*, I, at the ſame time, put to the preſs *An explication of our Lord's teſtimony concerning his kingdom before Pilate*; wherein I endeavoured, as ſhortly and plainly as I could, to give an account of the ſpiritual and heavenly nature of the kingdom of Chriſt, diſtinct from the kingdoms of this world, and from the ancient kingdom of God in Iſrael, the earthly figure of this heavenly thing; and likewiſe of the difference betwixt the New Teſtament and the Old, and of the reference of the one to the other, with reſpect to the kingdom of Chriſt. It was the view I had of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, that ſet me free from the prejudices I laboured under, with reſpect to his inſtitution of goſpel-churches, and diſpoſed me to attend to the ſcripture-evidence for the principles I now profeſs and practiſe, as only agreeable to the Old-Teſtament revelation, infallibly explained in the New, and to the nature of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt: I therefore publiſhed that book, well knowing, that what I ſaid of a viſible church could not be attended unto without prejudice; or indeed well underſtood, without a decerning of the nature of the kingdom of Chriſt; but a true decerning of that would make the other plain and eaſy.

None of you have yet attempted to give any anſwer to that book, though it cannot but appear to you; and I gave you a hint of it in the cloſe of the obſervations, that if I be in a miſtake, the foundation of it is laid forth in that book, as I clearly ſee the foundation of all your oppoſition unto the principles profeſſed by me, touching the viſible ſtate of Chriſt's kingdom

kingdom in this world, is laid in ignorance of, and inadvertency to the nature of his kingdom, as manifeſted in that book by the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament: till we be, therefore, at one about this matter, we can never come together upon the queſtions now in debate betwixt you and me; and ſo I once more recommend to your ſerious ſtudy the ſcheme of principles declared in that book, which, if you overthrow, you will prepare me to receive conviction from what you alledge againſt the congregational way, and in behalf of national churches.

When I ſtood before the commiſſion, ready to receive a ſentence of depoſition from the miniſtry of the goſpel, for profeſſing and practiſing congregational principles, after I had profeſſed and practiſed the national ones, I laid before my judges a ſhort ſtate of my difference from them in that matter, and a ſum of the reaſons of that difference, which if you, or any other, had but fairly impunged, the controverſy might have been brought to a clear and ſhort iſſue; but it ſeems you had not occaſion to peruſe that ſpeech before your book was gone to the preſs; and now, when you have peruſed it, you paſs a general cenſure upon it, which is, no doubt, your judgment; but you have not brought forth the grounds of your judgment, that the appearance of reaſon and revelation, which you muſt own had weight with me, might ſeem as little in my eye as in yours; yet this had been a greater ſervice done to your fellow-creature, though more laborious than your cenſure. You have indeed excerpted a few things out of that ſpeech, and treated them as you ſaw good, as I ſhall notice in the cloſe: but it has not been your deſign to attempt ſo much as a ſhort anſwer to the appearance of revelation and reaſon, that is ſtill to be found there.

Your review is upon the obſervations, and follows the order of them, and ſo directs my courſe in obſerving upon it: I ſhall therefore follow upon them, taking notice chiefly where your eye fixes on any part of the ſcripture, which, I am ſtill of the mind, muſt only decide this controverſy, and it is reaſonable we ſhould hear its deciſion. I am obliged to ſay in the entry, that my obſervations, at which you ſeem not a little offended, are very much ſtrengthened and confirmed to me by your review; and whether they will be ſo to the attentive reader, if any ſuch there be, the event will declare.

OBSER-

OBSERVATION I.

My firſt obſervation touched the manner of writers for claſſical preſbytery againſt the Independents, and your conformity to them, which I blamed; and I gave ſeveral inſtances.

The firſt, *viz.* Flying to human authority in the pinch where ſcripture-evidence is deſired, you have verified abundantly in your review, where you tell of Piſcator, Parcus, Calvin; great names, I own, but very ill uſed, where they ſerve only to fill up a vacancy of proof. You make ſome apology for uſing the authority of Dr Owen, when you ſay, "That "in ſo doing you take an argument from the mouth of an "adverſary;" though yet you would have it believed, his judgment was ſtronger in favour of Preſbytery than Independency. As to which I ſhall only ſay, I know his judgment beſt by his writings; and I wiſh I had ſuch Preſbyterians to do with as the Doctor was, and ſuch congregations as was his church, to which you may ſee his letter in his ſickneſs, printed in the folio edition of his ſermons 1721. But if I were to ſtudy conformity to you in this buſineſs about authors, and take what you call *an argument from the mouth of adverſaries*, I might tell you of the Scots confeſſion of faith, that owns no other church but the myſtical body, and a ſingle congregation. I might direct you to Calvin on Acts ii. 46. and v. 12. 13. and xv. 4. 22. and xxi. 22. and 1 Cor. v. 4. I might point out to you, as to the defender of national churches, Boyd on the Epheſians, chap. iv. 11. p. 503. & 504. And Gilleſpie's Eng. Pop. Cerem. part 3. dig. 1. and 4. And I might alſo deſire you to read and conſider *Altare Damaſcenum, de epiſcopi poteſtate extenſiva*, p. 206. 207. lateſt edition, *&c.* And thus I would not be behind with you, in taking the advantage of the conceſſions of thoſe you pretend to follow, as you do throughout your review, with the conceſſions of the Independents. But it is a poor ſhift to take ſhelter under the authority of a friend or adverſary, where ſcriptural defence fails, or to fill up the place of ſcripture-proof by any human authority.

When I was reading the Preſbyterian writers, thirſting for proof of claſſical Preſbytery; where I was expecting to find my doubts cleared by ſcripture-evidence, there I was remitted to authors and commentators, which, when conſulted, ſaid no more than had been already ſaid; but it was their authority

thority that was urged to ſatisfy me; and therefore that was magnified. After ſuch diſappointments, I have ſecurely heard the many mighty boaſtings that are to this day among your people, of the abundant confutation of the congregational principles by Preſbyterian writers, and by thoſe of the aſſembly at Weſtminſter; as I now hear you boaſting of the weight and ſolidity of their anſwers to their Independent brethren. But if there be any ſcriptural defence in theſe anſwers, ſerving to manifeſt the inſufficiency of what is advanced by me, that I have not ſeen or heard of, you will oblige me extremely, by ſhewing it to me. Yet, as neither all the objections nor anſwers of the claſſical Preſbyterians will be found calculated for the ſtate of the controverſy wherein you have been very briſkly engaging yourſelf, ſo you have inſinuated a ſuſpicion, that I am not, even from theſe divines, to expect an anſwer to all that is by me advanced, when you except my diſtinguiſhing ſingularities. The divines of Weſtminſter did their beſt to anſwer unto what was advanced againſt them. And it lies upon you to anſwer to the diſtinguiſhing and ſingular advances, which you ſay have been made by me. Though I would put you hard to it, if I required you to ſhew me the advance I have made, wherein I have not ſome renowned author or commentator with me; yet their authority can avail me nothing without ſcripture: And while I have the word of God, and the footſteps of the firſt flocks that followed Chriſt ſet before me there, I need not take ill with the old reproach of *ſingularity*. If you take that company from me, I ſhall own myſelf ſingular, though I had a million of your authors about me; but till you do this, which I am ſatisfied you have not, pleaſe forbear the old Jewiſh and Popiſh cant about ſingularity, and preferring my own notions of things before all men, both of piety and learning.

The ſecond inſtance has alſo ſome confirmation in what you ſay of the conſequences of the want of the due exerciſe of diſcipline among the Diſſenters at this day; to verify, as I take it, what was alledged by theſe vile writers, Edwards and Baſtwic, againſt the Independents. But as this new charge of yours againſt the preſent Diſſenters, falls no leſs on the Preſbyterian Diſſenters than on thoſe of other denominations, ſo I reckon your national church has no great ground to glory over the Engliſh Preſbyterians in that matter. I cannot well underſtand you in what you ſay on this head; but, as I take it, it ſavours to me of the old cant of the Popiſh party, and

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of the high church faction in England, and ſeems to import a better liking to the tenth age, as of all other the moſt free of ſects and infidelity, and ſhining in a peaceful uniformity among the reſt of the ages, as the moon among the ſtars. You are diſſatisfied with the laſt age for want of uniformity, and becauſe of ſects; and you are no better pleaſed with this age on the ſame account; and as little could the age of the apoſtles yield you ſatisfaction in this matter: and where to find any age to your mind in this thing I cannot tell, unleſs it be the tenth.

I am far from taking it for granted by you, but I am certain you have not been yet able to prove, that the principles maintained by me are any otherwiſe chargeable with the effects you aſcribe to them, than the goſpel is to be charged with all the damnable hereſies that ſprung up with that good ſeed, when it was ſown in the world; or than the true reformed doctrine and ſeparation from the church of Rome is chargeable with all the errors, hereſies, and ſects, and all the atheiſm and infidelity that appears among them called *Proteſtants*; or then you will ſay, that all the ſects of the laſt age flowed from the Preſbyterians their razing down the Epiſcopal uniformity to ſet up their own, and that all the infidelity and hereſy of this age flows from the principles of the revolution, yea from the revolution itſelf. I agree with you, that premiſſes from which abſurd inferences are plainly deducible, are not truth. But I have neither ſuch a conceit of your underſtanding nor of mine, as to imagine that we cannot draw inferences both plain and abſurd to us from ſome truths of the goſpel, which is wholly unto our depraved minds and hearts as the light is unto darkneſs. I ſhall tell you of an inference that is plain to me, and that I think I plainly deduce from all that I have had acceſs to conſider of the controverſy betwixt uniformity and liberty of conſcience in the matters of religion; and it is this, That while the world is the world, we muſt either ſuffer the horrible ignorance, ſpiritual ſlavery and ſuperſtition of the tenth century to take place in it, or the infidelity, hereſy, and ſects of this century, and of the laſt; and that in this caſe, the only way wherein a man can walk ſuitably to the rules of the goſpel, and his duty therein required toward the powers of the earth, ſo as to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world, and promote the eternal welfare of his own ſoul, and the ſouls of others, in a preparation for the world to come, is indeed the congregational way. And the ſpirit that ſhews itſelf in the various

ways of oppoſition to that, is to me plainly the ſame that ſhewed itſelf from the beginning againſt Chriſtianity, in the primitive profeſſion of it in the world

The third inſtance, touching metaphyſics, you have abundantly confirmed in your Review, as will ſoon be evident to every one that reads what you ſay, p. 28. p. 46. at the beginning, and p. 72. at the end, p. 73. at the beginning. You deſire me to compare my own beloved diſtinction, *the body aſſembling*, and *the aſſembly of that body*, and what you have ſaid on 1 Cor. xiv and ſee which of us have moſt plied that art. That diſtinction I own I uſed; but that it is peculiar to me, or that I regard it farther than it plainly takes its riſe from the ſcripture, I am not ſatisfied. If you or any man can ſay, that the word *church* ſtands in the ſame ſenſe 1 Cor. xiv. 23. as it ſtands 1 Cor. xi. 18. and 1 Cor. xiv. 35. then I ſhall own that I have plied that art in my reaſoning as much as you; and that is enough. And the diſtinction is manifeſt to every perſon that can underſtand you when you ſay, A miniſter in the preſbytery of Meigle went to the preſbytery ſuch a day, and made a ſpeech in it to better purpoſe than he does elſewhere; but ſuch another day he was not in the preſbytery, being confined to his houſe by ſickneſs. If it require a metaphyſical head to underſtand ſuch diſcourſe as this is, then the moſt plain men in your pariſh muſt be barbarians to one another in their converſation. Does not your ſervant know there is but one preſbytery of Meigle? and yet, if he attend his maſter, he ſees twelve preſbyteries in that place ordinarily in the year. I muſt ſay, you have been at a great loſs for inſtances of metaphyſical turns on ſcripture in my letter, to be compared with the Preſbyterian metaphyſics, when this came to be the only inſtance you had to give.

The fourth inſtance is as well ſupported in your Review as any of the foregoing. It is true you call it *a charge*, and becauſe unfixed, that is, though it be in your own words, yet the page of your book is not cited; therefore it is a calumny, a falſe and unchriſtian charge: And by this I perceive it offends you not a little, that I take notice of the pride of your own wiſdom, and of your uncharitable conduct toward the Independents in this controverſy. If theſe words be not your's, let the charge be declared unfixed. "I "look upon it as too injurious an imputation on a church, "which was ſo long a time under the immediate direction "of the bleſſed apoſtles, to imagine they did not embrace "the times of peace, and fix themſelves into ſuch a compe-

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" tent number of congregations as was beſt ſuited to the edi-
" fication of that ſacred body, and came up as near as might
" then be, to that becoming order and regularity, which is
" the great ornament and beauty of Chriſtian ſociety?"
Again: " Can it well be imagined, without an impeachment
" of the apoſtles, who, for the moſt part, had their reſidence
" for many years at Jeruſalem, not only during the heats of
" perſecution, but during the times of peace and quiet, that
" all this while they would have left this church in irregular
" circumſtances, been at no pains to eſtabliſh her conſtitu-
" tion, and make up her orderly diſtinct meetings for public
" worſhip?" But if theſe be your words, and if ſuch like arguments be to be found in the Preſbyterian writers, by every one that reads them, I humbly judge it no calumny: or, if you judge it ſtill a calumny, then I expect you'll clear yourſelf of it in time coming, by refuſing that any thing is according to the mind of Chriſt in his word, for this reaſon, becauſe to your wiſdom it appears diſorderly and indecent; and by forbearing to affirm, that a government is of Chriſt's inſtitution, upon this ground, that to you it appears decent and orderly.

As to what I ſaid, of your putting on a bar of infallibility, and freely uſing all manner of reflections on the Independents, while you can bear no inſinuation of a reflection from them, and carrying as if you were the only men that had a right to judge for all others, making conjectures, and laying down ſuppoſitions without proof, and explaining ſcriptures by them, and requiring that your inferences ſhould be received for undoubted truth, while you ſuffer not others to open their lips without ſtrict demonſtrations. I ſee you have demonſtrated this in your Review: you give me a promiſe in the beginning, and you tell me in the end you have kept it. The promiſe is, " That you are not to render railing for
" railing, nor treat the perſons of any men with burleſque
" or ignominious names, as I have done." This promiſe contains a heavy charge on me, which I have not ſeen fixed. You pretend to ſupport it in theſe words. Have you not the moſt ludicrous and unbecoming invectives againſt us in your Obſervations, terming the whole church *Babylon*, and particular perſons *perverters*; nay, malicious perverters of the ſcripture, detainers of the truth in unrighteouſneſs, and the like? The firſt of theſe has its foundation in theſe words of mine, " You are yet highly offended, that any in the place of the
" world where you live, ſhould come out of Babylon, and

" return to the congregations of the ſaints, there to cleave to " the truly uniting word of the apoſtles and prophets, in op- " poſition to that dividing and deſolating mean of union that " was ſet up in the place of it." But this touches only a ſtate of things, and declares, that I underſtand that ſcripture-word to comprehend in its meaning all that pertains to that falling away from the primitive church-order laid down by the apoſtles, and which we have now in the ſcriptures; of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks 2 Theſſ. ii. and ſo it indeed touches the ſtate of the queſtion betwixt you and me, *i. e.* Whether a national church, like that you contend for, be agreeable to the plan laid down by the apoſtles, or a thing quite of another kind, ſubſtituted in the place of it, and taking place by a deviation and falling away from it, and ſet up in oppoſition to it? You will not ſay, that the ſcripture is railing or treating the perſons of men with burleſque or ignominious names, when it gives that name to any ſociety to which you think it is applicable, and when it calls the Lord's people to come out of that ſociety. And would not the men of that ſociety, who declare it the moſt decent and orderly, and agreeable to the will of God, and where the Lord's people have been for many ages, *&c.* pronounce you a foul-mouth'd heretic and ſchiſmatic, and a railer, in applying that name to that ſociety? And whatever that ſociety be, you will find the zealous contenders for it profeſs as great certainty about their conſtitution as you do about yours, and can profeſs no leſs zeal in oppoſition to what they call libertiniſm and uncertainty as you can do.

But, after all, you are certainly in the right in ſeparating from them, and that ſociety is to you Babylon. Very well, follow your judgment. Yet you muſt own you have as little right to dictate to others the ſenſe of the word *Babylon*, as they have to dictate to you. Next you ſay, I call particular perſons malicious perverters of the ſcripture; and this ſeems to me to ariſe from theſe words of mine, touching your application of 2 Tim. iii. to them that ſeparate from your pariſh-communion. " While you thus maliciouſly pervert the " holy word of God, to ſhew that men ought to turn away " from the objects of your hatred." From that paſſage in the obſervations, the perverſion of that text will be manifeſt to the reader, when he conſiders it, and when he reads your application of it in your words by me quoted. If he can ſay, that it was made in the obſervation of that word of God, 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2.; yea, if your own conſcience can ſay it, then let it ſtand for

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an inſtance of my railing. But if it be otherwiſe, as Calvin's name and ſenſe of the text will not clear you of guilt, ſo it was meet you ſhould have treated the admonition I gave you, and the admoniſher, otherwiſe than to turn again and rend him. Next you ſay, I call particular perſons detainers of the truth in unrighteouſneſs; and, ſo far as I can know, the foundation of this charge is in theſe words of mine, "If you "receive any conviction from what I have ſaid, do not ſtifle "your convictions, do not reſiſt the truth, nor detain it in "unrighteouſneſs." Now, theſe are the particular inſtances you gave of my railing and unbecoming invectives, for which, you promiſe, you ſhall not render railing. But that the reader may ſee the confirmation of my fourth inſtance in the firſt obſervation, and how you have kept this promiſe, I ſhall point out ſome inſtances in your Review.

Your promiſe ſtands p. 7.; and in that ſame page you ſay, with reference to a ſentence of mine, which you call "a "charge, and falſe general charges, without condeſcending "on particulars, in their ſeveral circumſtances, are calum-"nious, and croſs to the very ſpirit of the goſpel." As I greatly queſtion the truth of this, becauſe it would lead me to quarrel ſeveral inſtances in the goſpel, ſo I find you ſay this in deep forgetfulneſs of your own charge againſt me in your promiſe, and of your promiſe itſelf. At leaſt, it ſatisfies me of the truth of what I have ſaid upon the fourth inſtance, whereof I am ſtill more and more ſatisfied by what follows.

Page 8. you ſay "I make light of Solomon's judgment, "and take care to prefer my own notions of things before all "men both of piety and learning."

Page 9. Beſide other hard words, you ſay, "That while I "charge the Preſbyterians with altering their ſpirit in the diſ-"pute with us, I myſelf outdo all the Preſbyterian writers "you ever read or ſaw on this ſubject."

Page 10. Your words are, "As for your ludicrous treat-"ment, I deſpiſe it, it being the common burden of all your "performances."

Page 11. "Fix the charge, leſt every one who reads "them call them a calumny, and ſo juſtly reckon, that, while "you are recommending a Chriſtian temper, you can at the "ſame time make falſe and unchriſtian charges." Again, "When he has given us ſuch examples, precepts, and "rules in the word, as are evident to every one who reads "it, one may juſtly ſay, that he (to wit, the Independ-

"ent)

" ent) who refuſes the plain and immediate conſequen-
" ces drawn from theſe, (as Mr Aytone's conſequences
" are to him), acts injuriouſly to Chriſt and his apoſtles."
Again, " Firſt give the heavy ſtroke, and then raiſe the loud
" cry."

Page 12. " Can you refuſe, without a bluſh, that you have
" made poſitive charges in your anſwer to the defence of na-
" tional churches, even when you have given no better argu-
" ment than your own aſſertion? Have you brought no
" unchriſtian charges againſt us in the explication of your
" propoſition? In a word, as we diſclaim Popiſh infallibi-
" lity, ſo we hold a poſitive certainty of our principles, in
" oppoſition to libertiniſm and uncertainty. Thus I have
" gone through your firſt general libel, which has all the
" characteriſtics of a calumny."

Page 14. " However you may be angry with a church's
" determining circumſtances of time and place, have you ſet
" down the different pages whereon this inconſiſtency is found-
" ed? No; that would have at once ſpoiled all." Page 36.
" Nay, in what page of my book is this fancy laid down? This
" was not conſiſtent with the nature of your Obſervations to
" tell us." Page 58. " You have concealed the page where
" they are to be found, for ends beſt known to yourſelf."
Page 59. " Theſe, I own, are my words; but have you told
" in what page? No; this would have marred all; they are
" p. 85. Now, if you had deſigned common juſtice in your
" obſervations, you would have directed your reader to
" page, *&c.*" Page 89. " I leave it to others, who ſhall
" read your conduct in this miſſive, to judge, if the methods
" purſued by you have the appearance of one who wrote for
" the ſake of truth, and as a debt he owed to it. Candour
" in laying an adverſary's mind and words before the world,
" and citing the places where they may be found, is ſome-
" what agreeable to ſuch a pretence; but how much of this,
" and that of a fair anſwerer, is to be found in your per-
" formance, I leave every reader to judge. I remember I
" have heard it always as a complaint on the church of
" Rome," *&c.* Page 15. " I have got rid of this inconſiſt-
" ency, and I wiſh it may not riſe again on me in ano-
" ther ſhape. Alas! you have turned it into another fi-
" gure.—But have you ſet down the pages where this formi-
" dable inconſiſtency is founded?"

Page 16. " Candour with ſolemn pretenſions is very ſuit-
" able.

" able. You next fright me with a freſh inconſiſtency. You " conceal the pages."

Page 17. " You have taken the freedom to miſrepreſent " me; and, leſt the fraud ſhould appear to every ordinary " reader, you have concealed the pages. I am no ſooner " free of one inconſiſtency than I am charged with another, " with equal honeſty and fairneſs."

Page 18. " And a greater perverſion of words is not con- " ceivable than what is here. Whether your conduct be " conſiſtent with common juſtice."

Page 19. " I wiſh I may get rid of it, for it is very formi- " dable."

Page 20. " How conſiſtent your conduct is with the ſo- " lemnity of your pretenſions in the concluſion."

Page 26. " You ſeem to let light of the context." Page 34. " The context which you are pleaſed ſometimes to let light " of, as p. 17." Page 79. " But this is of a piece with " your diſregarding contexts, as before, p. 17."

Page 30. " Such a way of doing is mean, and unbeco- " ming a man, to miſrepreſent and trifle."

Page 31. " You charge the Preſbyterians with poſitive aſ- " ſertions. But juſtly might I recriminate in every page al- " moſt, when all I meet with is nothing elſe but ſuch."

Page 32. " Have you marked down the pages of my book? " No; this would have given the reader eaſy acceſs to ſee " your trifling."

Page 49. " It would have been fair in you to have related " my mind fully. It would have been fair in you as an an- " ſwerer."

Page 52. " Such mean ſhifts as theſe you have recourſe to " will never be of any good iſſue."

Page 54. " You have trifled inſtead of anſwering."

Page 61. " Theſe are your words; but how conſcientiouſ- " ly they are jumbled together as expreſſive of my mind."

Page 63. " But theſe are methods unbecoming the ſobriety " of a Chriſtian."

Page 72. " By this we have a ſwatch of your candour, a- " mong other inſtances."

Page 75. " And leave your bold aſſertions in the conclu- " ſion, to have what weight they will with your admirers; " for I am of the mind they will have little weight with ſuch " as are capable to judge for themſelves. Your dexterity in " this point conſiſts in miſrepreſentations, concealments, and

" ſuch

" ſuch practices. I find nothing but poor ſhifts and carp-
" ings."

Page 76. " In the exceſs of your modeſty."

Page 77. " A pitiful juggle."

Page 79. " Sir, if I were at an end of this miſſive, I hope
" never to engage with one that has caſt off reaſon, as a mean
" of judging concerning things ſacred."

Page 80. " Your impertinent queſtions and wranglings in-
" ſtead of anſwers — Signs of a deſperate cauſe; your ca-
" vils and quibbles on Matth. xviii. I am obliged to you
" for your fatherly concern; but ſhall be glad I have never
" greater need of compaſſion."

Page 81. " I am wearied with ſuch trifling and ſtories, in-
" ſtead of anſwers."

Page 84. " You have a dexterity in raiſing imaginary in-
" conſiſtencies; and I expect you will ſhew an equal ſkill in
" reconciling a real one."

Page 87. " I am wearied with ſuch trifling, and am reſolved
" to be no more with it; ſo you may write, and impoſe on
" the credulous as much as you have a mind; but the event
" of theſe things is dangerous."

Page 89. " Sir, I have finiſhed my anſwer; and I hope,
" in an agreeableneſs to my promiſe in the entry; and muſt
" now tell you, that more notorious miſrepreſentations, baſe
" calumnies, and uncharitable cenſures, were never caſt up-
" on any ſociety of men."

OBSERVATION II.

I proceed now to the ſecond obſervation, wherein you find yourſelf charged with inconſiſtencies in managing a diſpute againſt the Epiſcopalians and Independents in one and the ſame book; for, under your correction, I offered ſome inſtances that ſerved to confirm me in my opinion, that it is not meet to engage in ſuch a diſpute.

Of the firſt inſtance you endeavour to clear yourſelf by ſignifying, " That a court meeting in the name of Chriſt,
" and acting in his authority, is merely circumſtantial, and
" a matter left by Chriſt to be managed according to his ge-
" neral rules of decency and order; but an officer acting in
" his name is a thing eſſential, and ſo different from what is
" purely circumſtantial, as that of more or fewer courts in
" any church is." But what is the difference? and how

comes

comes the one to be eſſential, and the other purely circumſtantial? And why may not the ſame apology be made for the Epiſcopal ſubordination of officers, not expreſsly inſtituted, that you made in your book for the Preſbyterian ſubordination of ruling courts not expreſsly inſtituted? You tell me, "It is "falſe; that there is neither apoſtolical example nor precept "for the ſubordination of judicatures." And the Epiſcopalian can tell you, with no leſs ſcripture-evidence, that it is falſe; that there is neither apoſtolical example or precept for the ſubordination of officers; and, if you will take their ſuppoſitions, whereby they explain ſcriptures, and draw conſequences from them, as you would have me to grant your ſuppoſitions, and admit your conſequences, they will give you two ſcriptures for one. But I was ſpeaking of theſe three courts, kirk-ſeſſions, provincial ſynods, and national ſynods, for which you cannot pretend apoſtolical example or precept.

Next you tell me, "If the proportion of my parallel have "any thing in it, it is this, *viz.* Becauſe Solomon hath ſaid, "*In the multitude of counſellors there is ſafety*; therefore "it is equally ſafe to deſcend from the counſel of a great "multitude, and devolve all into one perſon." But did not Solomon himſelf obſerve his own proverb, without being on a level with his counſellors? Had not the primitive one biſhop his preſbytery, with which he conſulted, as Cyprian informs us? Had not the Scots biſhop his preſbytery? Are there not councils of biſhops? And does not the Pope conſult with his cardinals, and other divines, and therein pretend to regard Solomon's ſaying as much as your ſynods, where one or two, perhaps the moſt ignorant in the aſſembly, can caſt the balance in a diviſion when it comes to the vote, and decide the moſt intricate and important queſtion that comes before them? I find Pope Clement XI. ſpeaking thus in the bull *Unigenitus*, "We therefore, by the favour of God, and "depending on his heavenly aid, carefully and diligently, as "the greatneſs of the affair required, ſet about ſo ſalutary a "work; and ordered very many propoſitions, faithfully ex"tracted out of the foreſaid book, according to the above"rehearſed editions reſpectively, and expreſſed both in the "French and Latin languages, by ſeveral maſters in ſacred "theology, to be accurately diſcuſſed and ſifted before two "of our venerable cardinal brothers of the holy Roman "church, and then before us: having alſo taken the advice "of ſeveral other cardinals in council, to be, with the great"eſt diligence poſſible, and maturity, pondered and exami-

" ned in congregations held at ſeveral times.—Wherefore, " after we had heard the ſuffrages of the foreſaid cardinals, " and other divines, exhibited to us, both by word of mouth, " and likewiſe by writing; and eſpecially having implored " the aſſiſtance of divine light, not only by private, but alſo " public prayers, ſolemnly appointed for that end, we do, " by this our conſtitution, to continue in perpetual force, " declare, condemn, and, with the utmoſt abhorrence, re- " ject all and every one of the propoſitions before inſerted " reſpectively," *&c.* So that unleſs you can affirm, that this ſaying of Solomon, this part of ſacred writ, contains an inſtitution for Preſbyterian ſynods, in oppoſition both to Epiſcopal church-government, and the government which is by the counſel and agreement of a company of elders or biſhops in every church, with the conſent of that church where they are elders, and where they ſtand in immediate ſubjection to and dependence on Jeſus Chriſt, that can by no means extricate you from your difficulty. And if you do not confine that word to the New Teſtament, you muſt own, that, in Solomon's days, there was a ſubordination of officers as well as of courts. Now the Epiſcopalian will tell you, that if this ſaying did not deſtroy the ſubordination of officers in Solomon's time, why may not the ſubordination of courts and officers hold together now alſo, without any prejudice to Solomon's ſaying?

You next give me a diſtinction betwixt an habitual and actual ſociety, *i. e.* as I take it, betwixt the ſynod of Angus having power to meet and act in Chriſt's name, and that ſynod exerciſing that power, as betwixt the Biſhop of Brichen having power to exerciſe the Epiſcopal office, and that Biſhop actually exerciſing it. And then you reprove me for being angry with a church's determining circumſtances as time and place; for no other reaſon, that I know, but becauſe I am as little for a court-meeting, and ruling over the churches of Chriſt in his name without his expreſs inſtitution, as I am for an officer's ruling over his officers without his expreſs inſtitution. And thus you clear yourſelf as to the firſt inſtance.

As to the ſecond inſtance; you firſt betake yourſelf to that ſhift which you are pleaſed to uſe throughout your letter, *viz.* " The pages are not ſet down." But do you ſhow, that I miſrepreſented you? And when you have now explained yourſelf in other words, I am not ſenſible of the conſiſtency of your advance againſt me, and againſt the Epiſcopalians.

The

he manner wherein you now expreſs your advance againſt me "I gave it as my opinion, that, according to what I could learn from the hiſtory of the New Teſtament, I was not able to determine myſelf of any one church that was no more but congregational, or that continued ſo." And you w expreſs what you advanced againſt the Epiſcopalians, in is manner. "But in after ages I perceived from human teſtimony, that the moſt of the churches mentioned by them were ſuch, and in ſmall villages." I hope you are keep now by theſe words, and not give me new ones in eir ſtead the next time, becauſe I have not ſet down the ge. Now, you muſt either deny the truth of what you have d upon human teſtimony, and ſo give up what you plead upon it to the Epiſcopalians, and own to him, that the urch where the one biſhop is found in the ſecond and third nturies, conſiſted of ſeveral diſtinct congregations; or you ıſt acknowledge, that the moſt of the churches, mentioned writers in the ages after the New-Teſtament ſcripture was iſhed, were congregational in your judgment, and that ey were ſuch in ſmall villages; ſuch then, according to you, :re the churches where that innovation, one biſhop, took ıce after the apoſtles, and theſe were the apoſtolic churches, d of the ſame kind with them; or elſe you ſay nothing a- inſt the Epiſcopalian: for if they differed from the apoſto- churches in this, that they were congregational, he has concern about them. It is enough to him, that he finds : one biſhop in the churches of the apoſtolic kind, conſiſt- ; of many different congregations: you muſt therefore ei- :r reconcile yourſelf by ſaying, that the fathers, after the ɔſtles departed from their plan, by erecting a multitude of ngregational churches; or that the churches erected by the ɔſtles, did in after ages dwindle into ſingle congregations; you muſt ſay, that though you remained doubtful in read- ; the New Teſtament, whether the apoſtles erected con- :gational churches; yet, by reading the fathers that lived areſt them, you came to perceive, that they did erect urches. If this be your meaning, I am able to perceive, at you ſpeak againſt the Epiſcopalian; but it is in a conceſ- n to me; ſo that you cannot ſpeak ſtrong and full in this ſe againſt us both; and this is what I was telling you. But t I ſhould take advantage of the conceſſion, you inquire, Have I any where ſaid, that theſe churches were inde- pendent?" To which I anſwer, Neither did I any where y, that the churches in the ages after the apoſtles were alto-

gether independent of councils, after the innovation of one biſhop in every church, which paved the way for ſynods and councils, that took place as the native conſequence of that innovation. But how comes the affair of councils upon the field, to clear you of an inconſiſtency in your way of ſpeaking about the ſize of the particular churches erected by the apoſtles?

You next endeavour to clear yourſelf of an inconſiſtency as to what you ſaid of the greater churches, by giving it another turn: For you had ſaid before, "And it is not to be "doubted, that though the number of profeſſors of Chriſti-"anity in any large city, and the catechumens, might be ſo "great, as they could not aſſemble in one place for the or-"dinary participation of ordinances; yet thoſe who were ad-"mitted to partake of the euchariſt, might have place to aſ-"ſemble in one body, or thoſe who could not have acceſs "at firſt, might have afterwards occaſion, by the removal "of others, to communicate in the ſame church or place; as "is the caſe of many cities even at this day." And every body ſees, that this ſerved to ſhew, that the biſhop's dioceſe, in the ſecond and third centuries, was no larger, even in the greater cities, than one of our city-pariſhes, that comes together to receive the Lord's ſupper in one place, and at one table. But now you ſay, "Though I ſhewed what were "the methods uſed to raiſe the Epiſcopal power in large ci-"ties, where there were more congregations than one, when "the altar was erected in the biſhop's church, and ſo one "prieſt and one altar, and *one church* and *one altar* came to "be current terms; yet I never ſo much as inſinuated, that "this practice, or theſe terms, were according to the New "Teſtament." And then you ſay, "Thus I have got rid "of this inconſiſtency." But let me tell you, thus a man can rid himſelf of any inconſiſtency, by ſaying another thing that to him appears not ſo inconſiſtent. And I am not yet ſenſible, that you was, in your book and words before ſet down, or the place where they are, ſhewing, that this was a method uſed to raiſe the Epiſcopal power, even the turning of his dioceſe, that at firſt conſiſted of many communicating congregations, into one communicating congregation, coming together in one place, to partake of the ſupper, as does one of your city-pariſhes. But if you alledge, as you ſeem to do, "That this was a method uſed to raiſe the "Epiſcopal power;" then you ſay againſt the Epiſcopalian, that if the one biſhop had remained dioceſan, as at the be-

ginning,

ginning, and had not become congregational, as he did in the ſecond and third centuries, his power had been leſs.

Thus you cannot get rid of this inconſiſtency, unleſs you either own to the Epiſcopalian, that dioceſan Epiſcopacy was in being in the very firſt ages after the apoſtles, or acknowledge to the Independent, that the churches in theſe ages were only congregations, the greateſt of them coming together in one place to eat the Lord's ſupper; and if theſe were the churches where the innovation of one biſhop took place, theſe were the apoſtolic churches. You hear of the one altar as ſoon as you hear of the one biſhop, and that is from Ignatius, who was biſhop of no leſs a church than that in Antioch; and he writes of it to the church of the Epheſians, and to the church of the Philadelphians. You do not deny, that the term *one church* and *one altar*, was borrowed from the Old Teſtament; but you'll find one altar in the New-Teſtament-church, even Jeſus Chriſt, both altar and ſacrifice, whereof the whole true Iſrael, the myſtical body partakes, Heb. xiii. 10.—15. And though the fathers miſtook, in the application of the word *altar*, and this miſtake occaſioned ſuperſtition, and at length idolatry; yet they had a foundation in the New Teſtament, for the uſe of the word *altar*, with reſpect to a congregation of the ſaints, coming together in one place to partake of the ſupper: for in their communion in that bread and cup there is a repreſentation of the communion of the true Iſrael, in their one altar Jeſus Chriſt; and this is the antitype of the typical Iſrael, their communion in the typical altar, 1 Cor. x. 15.—18. Thus far the fathers ſpake according to the New Teſtament, as well as the Old, in ſpeaking of one church and one altar. And whatever you ſay of the raiſing of the Epiſcopal power; yet if they had held by their firſt notion of one church and one altar, there had never been a dioceſan biſhop in the world; but the forſaking of that, and keeping by the notion of one biſhop and one church, was the true cauſe of all the miſchief that followed. For out of this came one catholic viſible church, with one biſhop or one council, with as many altars as pariſhes; a monſter of a church, the like unto which there is nothing either in the old Teſtament or in the New, or among the firſt fathers; though that myſtery of iniquity was then working, firſt in the affair of one biſhop in one church, and then in the buſineſs of ſynods and councils, that, in their very firſt appearance, divided the churches, (as in the deciſions

deciſions about Eaſter), but ſerved to join together that horrible catholic viſible body, "The man of ſin."

The third, you ſay, is the ſecond turned into another ſhape, and complain that I have not ſet down the pages; while yet you own I have ſet down pages for the one branch, which is the only branch whereon you charge me with falſehood. And as for the other branch, for which the page is not ſet down, you yourſelf own it, and direct us to one of the pages where it is found. What is the ground then of the loud cry about noting down your pages here, when you note down the page, and give your words, to eaſe the reader? You ſhould have ſet down the whole ſentence, which is as follows. "If "our author is not acting the Jeſuit, he muſt underſtand "by congregation ſuch a competent number of Chriſtians, as "can aſſemble for ordinary in one place, for public worſhip, "and may be edified by the preaching of one paſtor at a "time." And this is the firſt branch.

The other ſtands in theſe words in my Obſervations, p. 10. "But againſt the Epiſcopalians you would ſet it on another "footing, and have recourſe to the Lord's ſupper, and the "whole body partaking of one altar, as it is called, diſtinct "from the catechumens, p. 534. 535. So, againſt the In-"dependents, you make Perth and Dundee, and the like, "to be two congregations, and againſt the Epiſcopalians, "you make them but one." I have a little before cited the words of pages 534. 535. where you ſignify, that, ſetting aſide the catechumens, they that partook of the euchariſt in larger cities, might aſſemble in one body, or as they do in many cities at this day.

Now, Sir, that I may not ſeem to be playing the Jeſuit with this word *congregation*, and that there may be nothing but candour betwixt us, let us bring it to theſe cities at this day, Dundee and Perth, in each of which there are two aſſemblies ordinarily hearing ſermon, and yet but one aſſembly for breaking of bread; and therefore there is but one pariſh of Dundee, and one pariſh of Perth; whereas in Edinburgh and Glaſgow, where there are ſeveral aſſemblies for the Lord's ſupper, there are ſeveral pariſhes. Though there ſhould be many other kinds of congregations in a city; yet if there be but one body of Chriſtians there, aſſembling from time to time in one place to eat the Lord's ſupper, there is only one ſuch congregation there as I call a *Chriſtian church*; and in ſuch a congregation all the ordinances of church-worſhip, and the Chriſtian diſcipline ought to be performed. But in your

your way of ſtating the controverſy with the Independents, you would make two ſuch congregations as are churches both in Dundee and Perth; while it is manifeſt, from your words before cited, p. 534. 535. of your book, that againſt the Epiſcopalians you make but one ſuch congregation as is a church in Dundee, and one in Perth; yet now you would bring yourſelf off by telling me, "That in theſe pages you "hold, that in large and populous cities there were ſeveral "congregations." Yes, you ſaid ſo; but in theſe you included the catechumens, while you did not doubt but they who were admitted to partake of the euchariſt might aſſemble in one place. And you ſay further, for clearing yourſelf, "Though the guiſe of theſe times brought it in cuſtom, for "gaining their end, to have all of them communicate at the "biſhop's church; yet it never entered into my head they "were all one ſingle congregation on that account; nor have "I given the leaſt inſinuation of it." You do indeed ſpeak of a practice at Rome, that had its riſe about the year 312, of ſending part of the elements from the biſhop's church to other congregations in the city; but before that time, you ſeem to contend, that the communicating church in a place was but a ſingle congregation. Your words are: "It is true "Juſtin Martyr ſays, that after the preſident of the aſſembly "hath conſecrate the bread and wine, the deacons ſtand "ready to diſtribute it to every one preſent, and carry it to "thoſe who are abſent; yet it doth not appear, that it was "to any aſſembly of Chriſtians, but rather to ſingle perſons "of the ſame congregation, who had not acceſs to be pre-"ſent: for he ſeems plainly to ſpeak of the preſident of one "ſingle congregation, and what was the general practice in "his time."

You clear yourſelf in the ſame manner of the fourth inſtance: for you firſt tell me, I conceal the pages, and charge me with fraud in ſo doing, and this without ſhewing that I have miſrepreſented you. I had ſaid, "Againſt the Inde-"pendents you gather together all thoſe converted by the "miniſtry of the apoſtles in Jeruſalem, and all thoſe con-"verted by Paul's miniſtry in Epheſus, where he continued "by the ſpace of two years; ſo that all they which dwelt "in Aſia heard the word of the Lord Jeſus: and this to make "the number of Chriſtians both in Jeruſalem and Epheſus "to be ſo great, that there behoved to be many congrega-"tions in each of them." Needed I quote pages for this? Is not the number of them converted by the preaching of the goſpel

goſpel in Jeruſalem and Epheſus, the grand branch of your argument proving a plurality of congregations in Jeruſalem and in Epheſus? Where then is the fraud in concealing pages? But leſt you ſtill complain of fraud, are not theſe your words touching the church of Epheſus? "We ſhall obſerve "the former method, 1. To ſhew, that there were more "congregations in her than one: 2. That all theſe were under "the government of a college or preſbytery, and not a ſingle "perſon or biſhop. As to the firſt, The multiplicity of con- "verts that were at Epheſus, and their great number will "make it evident, that there were in that church ſeveral "congregations or aſſemblies for public worſhip. And for "clearing this, it is obſervable, that the Apoſtle Paul conti- "nued at Epheſus more than the ſpace of two years, &c. "Beſides, during the time of his continuance there, it is "remarked by the inſpired hiſtorian, *That all that dwelt in "Aſia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks*; "and this they had the readier acceſs unto, in that the tem- "ple of Diana being there, the city of Epheſus was the pu- "blic place of their worſhip, which occaſioned their fre- "quent reſorting thither."

If theſe be your words, I hope you will not deny, that this is among the firſt things you ſay in the proof of a church in the city of Epheſus, conſiſting of many congregations. After ſeveral flouriſhes upon the multiplicity of converts at Epheſus, including all them on whom fear fell, your words are, "And it is worth notice, that infinite wiſdom directed "the apoſtles to make their longeſt ſtays in remarkable ci- "ties, and to make the offer of the goſpel in thoſe places "where was the greateſt reſort of people, ſuch as Jeruſalem "and Samaria in the land of Judea, Antioch in Syria, Co- "rinth in Grecia, Rome in Italy, and Epheſus in the Leſſer "Aſia. But it muſt be moſt ſurpriſing, if in all of theſe the ſuc- "ceſs of the apoſtles labours muſt ſtill be circumſcribed within "the bounds of one aſſembly, or congregation of Chri- "ſtians." By this time the reader will be ſenſible, how little ground there is for the charge of fraud in concealing the pages, and perverting the ſenſe, upon this branch of the inconſiſtency; and how little reaſon you had to complain of my taking the "freedom to miſrepreſent you, as if you had al- "ledged, that all theſe converted in Judea and Aſia had been "members of the churches of Jeruſalem and Epheſus." As to the other branch; it happened, that I had ſet down the page and your expreſs words; ſo you had no evaſion that way.

way. You ſet down over again ſome of your words cited by me, and own them to be yours, thus: "But what is the a-"mount of all this? Alas, he is inconſiſtent with himſelf; "for I hold," ſay you, p. 425. "that the *church*, in the "ſingular number, ſo far as I can obſerve, is no where in "the New Teſtament made uſe of in expreſs terms, to de-"note any more than the *Chriſtians in ſome city*, except "when the *Catholic church* is meant. Theſe, I own, are "my words, and I ſhall hold the ſame opinion." You might alſo have owned the reſt of them, which are to be ſeen in the Obſervations, p. 11. But how you get rid of the inconſiſtency betwixt what is now owned, and what is ſaid above, I ſee not; If it be not by the addition you now make to the word *city*: for you now ſay, "That city, or its vici-"nities, and that city, or its neighbourhood." If you include not all Judea in the vicinities of Jeruſalem, and all the proconſular Aſia in the neighbourhood of Epheſus, and ſo give up to the Epiſcopalians what you was juſt now taking from them, you muſt mean ſomething like the ſuburbs; and ſo this addition of *vicinities* and *neighbourhood*, whereby you correct your former aſſertion, ſerves to enlarge the churches of Jeruſalem and Epheſus, but not to extricate you. After inquiring at me, Where is the inconſiſtency? you tell me on the one hand, "I hold, that the church of Epheſus imports only "the *Chriſtians* in that city or its neighbourhood; and yet "it muſt be taken diſtributively for ſeveral congregations "therein." But you ſhould alſo have told, that this was one great reaſon why it ſhould be ſo taken, *viz.* That the ſucceſs of the goſpel preached in Epheſus, extended throughout all Aſia. Then, on the other hand, you tell me, "I "hold againſt Dr Hammond, that the church of Epheſus "cannot be taken diſtributively for all the churches of Aſia. "Now the whole ſecret is out." And I alſo ſay, now the whole ſecret is out. The telling of a part has brought out the whole.

On the fifth inſtance you make a very loud cry againſt me; but you as little clear yourſelf as on any of the foregoing. You had inferred, from what I ſaid upon Acts xv. in the Explication of the propoſition, how juſtly I ſhall not now ſtay to declare, "He plainly grants this ſynod had a dogmatical "power, but not that of juriſdiction and cenſure." Againſt this you endeavour to prove, that the one could not be without the other; becauſe "a power and authority to deter-"mine miniſterially in matters of doctrine is eccleſiaſtical,

" and belongs unto a church; and as theſe churches had a " power dogmatically to judge of falſe doctrines, ſo there " was a juriſdictional power connected with it;" and you conclude your proof of the neceſſary connection betwixt theſe two powers thus: " This muſt be a truth in itſelf evident, " unleſs we ſhall ſuppoſe a court veſted with a power to give " forth laws and regulations, and yet not impowered to cen- " ſure the contraveners thereof, which ſeems to imply a " contradiction," p. 325. 326. 327. Againſt this I alledged, you allowed the power of the key of doctrine, which I took to be the ſame thing with your dogmatical power, to a ſingle paſtor; whom yet you would not ſuffer, by himſelf, to exerciſe the power of juriſdiction and cenſure, or to exerciſe the key of diſcipline, which I took to be the ſame thing with your power of juriſdiction and cenſure.

But now your come off by a twofold diſtinction, 1. Between a doctrinal power and a dogmatical power. And you ſay you took care to diſtinguiſh thus before. I did indeed obſerve a diſtinction between a doctrinal power and a power of juriſdiction; but, till now, I ſaw you not diſtinguiſh theſe three, the doctrinal power, the dogmatical power, and the power of juriſdiction and cenſure, which you ſay is connected with the dogmatical. And I can ſay nothing of your diſtinction till you inform me of the nature of your dogmatical power, as it is diſtinguiſhed from your juriſdictional power, which you ſay is connected with it, and from your doctrinal power. 2. You diſtinguiſh between power as exerciſing in the preaching of the word to any competent number of Chriſtians, and as exerciſed in a court of Chriſt, *i. e.* as I take it, between a perſon exerciſing power, and a court exerciſing power. And if this be it, then I may learn, that our doctrinal power is the power that a ſingle miniſter exerciſes when he declares the laws of Chriſt; and the dogmatical power is the power that two or three of them in a ſeſſion, or twenty of them in a preſbytery, exerciſe when they declare the ſame thing together that they declared before ſeparately in their pulpits; and ſo it is their meeting together that makes the power to change from doctrinal into dogmatical. Well; but if two or three miniſters ſhould meet in a ſeſſion, and declare ſome laws of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſend them in an epiſtle to all the miniſters and pariſhes in Scotland or in Britain, inform me, would this be the dogmatical power? Becauſe I have a ſuſpicion it would remain ſtill doctrinal only. And if this be ſo, then I am taught, that the dogmatical power is the power

that

that cannot be without the power of juriſdiction and cenſure; and therefore, whatever more I may come to have to ſay about this dogmatical power, this one thing is to be ſaid about it, that is inſeparably connected with the power of juriſdiction and cenſure. And ſo you ſtand clear of the fifth inconſiſtency, when the whole intrigue is come out.

The ſixth inſtance you are pleaſed to ſet down in your own words; and you ſay, "I wiſh I may get rid of it, for it is "very formidable; for ſay you, I have maintained againſt "the Independents the ſubordination of the ſynagogues unto "ſuperior courts, and made much uſe of the Jewiſh church "as the ſame thing eſſentially with the Chriſtian. Againſt "the Epiſcopalians I affirm, the Chriſtian church was not "founded till the reſurrection of Chriſt." And then you make your uſual complaint about the pages, and that theſe are not the words in your book. But I would be content to ſee wherein I have miſtaken or miſrepreſented you. Need I ſet down all the words of the firſt, ſecond, and third pages, of the very firſt ſection of the firſt chapter of your book, to ſhow, that you affirm the ſame thing more ſtrongly than in the words by me uſed, and bring arguments to prove it? Do you not conclude your reaſoning thus? "And in this I "am ſeconded by Mr Sage, that great champion for Epiſco-"pacy, who ſays, That the Chriſtian church was not, could "not be founded till our Lord was riſen, ſeeing it was to be "founded on his reſurrection." And when you have laid down this principle, with the conſent of your adverſary, do you not draw theſe two inferences from it againſt the Epiſcopalian? "1. That there is no argument can be drawn for Epiſcopal "government, from the actings of the twelve apoſtles and "ſeventy diſciples during the days of our Lord's perſonal mi-"niſtry, and while their meſſage was only, *The kingdom of* "*heaven is at hand.*—2. That the government of the Jewiſh "church, according to the ſubordination of their prieſts, "can be no argument for the like under the New Teſta-"ment." And, in the end of the ſection, you ſay theſe words: "And if there be any order or ſet of officers that "were under the Jewiſh diſpenſation, to which the miniſters "of the goſpel have a relation, or anſwer to, it muſt be to "the ordinary prophets and teachers in the ſynagogues, who "read and expounded the law and the prophets unto the "people, but had no concern in the temple."

But, after you have complained of my injuſtice, you now tell me what you really hold; for you ſay, "I hold," p. 1.

" that properly the Chriſtian church was founded on the re-
" ſurrection of Chriſt, and had not a formal being, diſtinct
" from the Jewiſh, till that time; yet the goſpel-church had
" its beginnings in the miniſtry of John the Baptiſt, and was
" gradually carried on by Chriſt and his apoſtles, till its for-
" mal eſtabliſhment diſtinct from the Jewiſh polity." By this newly added clauſe, about its beginnings in the miniſtry of John the Baptiſt, it ſeems to you it had not any beginnings before; and you have afforded ſome beginnings of a revival to the argument, from the actings of the twelve and the ſeventy, while their meſſage was, " The kingdom of heaven is
" at hand," which before you deſtroyed; for now you ſay,
" While that kingdom was only at hand, it even then had its
" beginnings, and was carried on gradually by Chriſt and his
" apoſtles." And how it was carried on before it was founded, and how it had its beginnings before it had a formal being, you can declare when you write again, by adding another clauſe, or by a metaphyſical diſtinction or two, ſhewing, that the oppoſition is not *ad idem, ſecundum idem, eodem modo, et eodem tempore*; and ſo no contradiction.

You ſay further, " Again, I hold, that the covenant of
" grace under the Old Teſtament and that under the New
" were ſubſtantially the ſame," p. 120. But I can ſee nothing like that in all that page of your book, unleſs it be in this ſentence. " None will deny the connection betwixt the
" manner of admiſſion under the Old Teſtament to that of
" the New or goſpel ſtate of the church, in *the fulneſs of*
" *time*, that acknowledge, with all orthodox divines, that
" the conſtitution of thoſe two churches were eſſentially the
" ſame, and that their only difference was in accidentals." Becauſe it belongs to your reaſon to determine what was eſſential to the Old-Teſtament church, you are of opinion, that the whole temple-ſervice and prieſthood, and ſubordination among the prieſts, was accidental to the Old-Teſtament church of Iſrael; and that the peculiar regulations in the New-Teſtament-church, agreeable to the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, vaſtly differing from that church-œconomy which hitherto had obtained by divine appointment, are but accidental to the New-Teſtament church: but the manner of admitting members was eſſential to the Old-Teſtament church, and ſo muſt be alſo in the New-Teſtament church, which is the ſame eſſentially. According to this, your only way with the Epiſcopalian was to tell him, " That the government of
" the Jewiſh church, according to the ſubordination that
" was

" was among the prieſts, was not eſſential, but accidental to " the Jewiſh church; and therefore can be no argument for " the like under the New Teſtament;" and not to draw this as an inference from your grand poſition, " The Chri- " ſtian church was not founded till Chriſt's reſurrection:" for, by this manner of overthrowing the Epiſcopal arguments from the Jewiſh church, you expoſe yourſelf to the Independent, and give him leave to tell you, that your arguments from the ſtate of the church before Chriſt's reſurrection will not prove the like under the New Teſtament; for the New-Teſtament church was not founded till Chriſt's reſurrection.

You proceed, and ſay farther, " That there was good rea- " ſon to infer a ſubordination of judicatures under the New " Teſtament from the ſubordination of the ſynagogues to " the eccleſiaſtical ſanhedrim under the Old; and that this " argument was founded, not on the identity of the thing, " but on a parity of reaſon," p. 283. *&c.* " Now, ſhew " me the inconſiſtency of theſe propoſitions?" But the Epiſcopalian can tell you, his argument for the ſubordination of officers from the Jewiſh ſubordination is not founded on the identity of the thing, but on a parity of reaſon. He does not plead for a typical prieſthood, but for good order among church-officers under the New Teſtament, as no leſs needful than under the Old; and he has this advantage of you, that, in theſe places which you cite for the ſubordination of ſynagogues to the ſanhedrim, there is not one word of a ſynagogue, nor of the rulers of ſynagogues in ſeparate or claſſical meetings, p. 281. 282.; but expreſs mention of the ſubordination of the church-officers, Levites, prieſts, and chief prieſts. But your poſition againſt him overthrows all his arguments, " The New-Teſtament church was not founded " till the reſurrection of Chriſt;" and therefore the government of the Jewiſh church can be no argument for the like under the New Teſtament: and, by parity of reaſon, it overthrows your arguments againſt the Independent.

In your book you ſtill contend, that what you bring from the Jewiſh church, and the government you plead for from thence, is moral; and by this you anſwer the objection taken from the abrogation of the Jewiſh polity, in one of the pages to which you now refer, by the *&c.* p. 285. 286. But in your Review, p. 11. you tell us, " That our bleſſed Lord " might have revealed another plan or ſcheme of government " in his houſe than what he hath done, I believe no Preſby- " terian will deny." And thus you ſtand clear of the ſixth inconſiſtency,

inconſiſtency, when you are cleared as to one thing that is ſubjoined; as to which you ſay, "But alas! I find another "thing ſubjoined," p. 12. "namely, That the Chriſtian "churches were formed according to the ſynagogues; and "yet I would not ſuffer the church in Jeruſalem to be like a "ſynagogue. Yes, I will allow it to be ſo as to the order of "its ſtanding officers and ſome uſages; but not as if it was "a ſingle congregation." I expected you would here tell me of a claſſical ſynagogue, to which your claſſical church ſhould anſwer; becauſe you had ſpoken in your book, p. 281. of the ſeparate and claſſical meetings of the rulers of the ſynagogues. But now you have thought fit to drop this, and acknowledge, that the ſynagogues were but ſingle congregations, and deny that the church in Jeruſalem was like a ſynagogue in this reſpect.

The Chriſtian church, then, according to you, is not formed according to ſynagogues, as it is claſſical. Further, you do not pretend to point out any other court to which the ſynagogues were ſubjected, but that ſupreme catholic court that was erected at Jeruſalem; and that court, as it behoved it to meet in the place which the Lord choſe, the typical place, ſo it conſiſted of the high prieſt, the prieſts, and the Levites, diſtinguiſhed by you from them that judged in the matters that you make purely civil. But you are not of the mind, that the miniſters of the goſpel anſwer to the ſet of officers that judged in that court, or that they have a relation to them; and you think they anſwer only to the ordinary prophets and teachers in the ſynagogues, that had no concern in the temple: ſeeing, therefore, you have never attempted to prove more than the ſubordination of ſynagogues, ſingle congregations, to a catholic court under the Old Teſtament, and that court made up of typical officers, to whom the miniſters of the goſpel have no relation, and meeting in a typical place, tell me by what parity of reaſon your claſſical churches, and their ſubordination to provincial and national ſynods, the laſt acting independently of any catholic court on earth, come out of the ſynagogues and their ſubordination? or what is there in all this any way like the ſynagogues? Yet you ſay, you allow the church in Jeruſalem to be like a ſynagogue, "as to the order of its ſtanding officers;" but what ſay you of the chief ruler of the ſynagogue? "and ſome uſages;" but I want to know what theſe uſages are; and if this be one of them, That the ſcripture was read in the hearing of the whole ſynagogue; and this another, That any Jew had acceſs

to

to exhort publicly in the ſynagogue? Thus I have followed you upon the ſecond obſervation; and, holding what I ſaid in the concluſion of it as here again repeated, I go forward with you to

OBSERVATION III.

On which you review what you call my critical examinations.

And, 1. You are very ſhort upon your *at* and *of*, and perhaps ſubſtantial; but I can ſay nothing about it, till I underſtand it. You complain of my ſpending a great deal of time on this very trivial point, which you now ſay, "Though it was "yourſelf that brought it on the field, can neither affect the "cauſe the one way nor the other." Yet I find you ſtill ſpeuding time upon *at* and *of*, as thinking the cauſe ſome way affected by theſe; for, p. 36. 37. you have a criticiſm upon them, whereby I am made to underſtand, that the brethren that were *at* Lyſtra and Iconium, Acts xvi. 2. were only occaſionally there at that time; but if it had been ſaid, the brethren *of* Lyſtra and Iconium, they had certainly dwelt there. You give me a reaſon for your diſtinguiſhing between *at* and *of*, on Acts xv. 2. and xvi. 4. in theſe words, "I "conceive, that the elders *of* the church imports the pecu- "liar relation that is between that church and them; where- "as the elders *at* Jeruſalem carries no more in it than the "bare indication of the place where they were at the time, "without the leaſt hint of any ſtated relation they bore unto "that church."

Thus you find elders *of* a church, not *of* a place, but *at* a place; and ſo there is not, according to you, a relation betwixt an elder or elders, and a ſpot of ground, with all the people on that ſpot, by virtue of their living there. And thus you overthrow the intent of your firſt criticiſm on *at* and *of*. I told you before, that if you would ſpeak according the original, you muſt ſay *in* where you ſaid *at*; ſo, Acts xvi. 4. I read ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ, as ℣ 2. ἐν Δυστροις. And, according to your criticiſm, when I read Philip. i. 1. "The ſaints which are *at* "Philippi, with the biſhops and deacons," I am not to underſtand, that theſe reſided in that city; for I am not to conclude more but the indication of the place where they were at the time; and ſo, for ought I know, it might be an aſſembly of ſaints, biſhops, and deacons met in Philippi at that time.

time. But then what becomes of the Preſbyterian argument for many biſhops in one church, taken from theſe words? The like may be ſaid of Rev. ii. 24. You ſay further on Rev. ii. and Acts xx. 17. "The elders *of* the church expreſ-"ſeth the relation between the elders and the church; "whereas had it been ſaid the elders *at* the church, no more "could have been concluded than the bare indication of the "place where they were at the time." Here you ſhift in *the church* in the room of *the city* or *place*, which alters your criticiſm a little, but adds nothing to its ſtrength, unleſs you affirm, that theſe words, Acts xx. 28. "The flock, ου, "the Holy Ghoſt, hath made you overſeers," expreſs not the relation betwixt theſe overſeers and that flock, but only ſignify, that they were there when they were made overſeers. And perhaps you will alledge, that when Peter ſays, "the "elders," τους εν υμιν, 1 epiſt. chap. 5. ℣ 1. he does not expreſs any relation betwixt theſe elders and the Chriſtians among whom they were, but only that they were among them at the time. Thus I am of the mind you have ſucceeded no better in your ſecond critical effort upon *at* and *of* than in the firſt.

2. You ſpend more time on επι το αυτο, but to as little purpoſe: for as I can underſtand you, the great thing you ſay in defence of your criticiſm on Acts iv. 25. 26. 27. compared with Pſal. ii. 1. 2. againſt what was alledged by me, is this, "That, in the judgment of all the apoſtles, the rulers that "were gathered together, επι το αυτο, are the kings, Herod, "and Pontius Pilate." And you propoſe this queſtion to me, Who hold the *rulers* there to ſignify the *rulers of Iſrael*? "But are not all kings rulers, though all rulers are not kings? "And if ſo, they cannot be excluded here; nay, the apoſtles "expreſsly include them." But let me alſo inquire, If, where kings and rulers are diſtinguiſhed, we muſt not underſtand by rulers, theſe that are not kings? You give me another queſtion, "Have they any where here made a diſtinc-"tion between the rulers and the kings, or inſinuate, that "we are only to underſtand the Jewiſh rulers?" You anſwer this queſtion yourſelf, and ſay, "No, it is only the "people of Iſrael who are charged." But I am not ſatisfied in this anſwer, nor in the reaſon that ſupports it; for it is plain to me, that the kings of the earth and the rulers are as much diſtinguiſhed, ℣ 26. and Pſalm ii. 2. as the heathen and the people are, ℣ 25. and Pſalm ii. 1. And if the rulers of the Jews be neither intended by the word *rulers*, ℣ 26. nor any way pointed at in that deſignation, *the people of Iſrael*

℣ 27.

℣ 27. they are not all charged with the death of Chriſt here, where there is ſo particular mention of the parties concerned in it; which is a wonder, conſidering the hand they had in it. And whereas you ſay, "It is only the people of Iſrael "who are charged, and the charge of his death is on the "Jews, upon the whole nation, becauſe done by their inſti-"gation and connivance, Acts ii. 23. If this only exclude the rulers of the people, and if when you ſay the Jews and the whole nation, you except the rulers, then you ſay ſomething to the purpoſe; but at the ſame time you ſpeak what cannot be ſupported by Acts ii. 23. and what is plainly contrary to the truth of the thing, Matth. xxvii. 1. 2. 12. 13. 17. 20. Mark xv. 1. 4. 11. Luke xxiii. 13.—24. And how the death of Chriſt could be charged on the whole nation of Iſrael, without charging eſpecially the rulers with it, who were, when aſſented to by the Jews whom they ruled, as much the nation and people of Iſrael as Herod and Pontius Pilate were the kings of the earth, is not eaſy to be imagined.

There is nothing more manifeſt in the book of Acts, than that the apoſtles charged the Jewiſh rulers with the death of Chriſt, Acts iii. 17. v. 27. 28. 29. 30. So that I cannot underſtand how you came to cite Acts ii. 23. to ſhew the contrary. And if you had conſidered the context, you might have ſeen, that the apoſtles Peter and John were juſt come from the preſence of the Jewiſh rulers, where Peter had been ſaying, ℣ 8. 10. 11. "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of "Iſrael, be it known unto you, and to all the people of "Iſrael, that by the name of Jeſus Chriſt of Nazareth, whom "ye crucified, — This is the ſtone which was ſet at nought "of you builders." And you might alſo have perceived, that this ſame company, in the words following theſe in debate, ſpeak with reference to the late threatenings of theſe rulers againſt the apoſtles, ℣ 17. 18. and ſay ℣ 29. "And "now, Lord, behold their threatenings;" plainly declaring, that theſe rulers that had been gathered together againſt Chriſt, both with Herod and with Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, were now threatening them. How then could you imagine, that the apoſtles and their company were here ſpeaking nothing of the rulers of the Jews, and making no application of the 2d Pſalm to them, but to Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews, in diſtinction from them, when it is ſo manifeſt they are eſpecially pointed at?

Now, Sir, I ſay again, that in Luke xxiii. I find both

Herod and his men of war gathered together againſt Chriſt, with the people of Iſrael, rulers and ruled, and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles with him, gathered together with the people of Iſrael, rulers and ruled; I find the kings of the earth, Pilate ſtanding up, and the Jewiſh rulers gathered together before him, againſt Chriſt; and Herod ſtanding up, and the Jewiſh rulers gathered together before him, againſt Chriſt; and I ſtill inquire, what more ſays the text? And where is the text in the New Teſtament, from which it can be made appear, that the phraſe επι το αυτο cannot there ſignify *in one place*, or *in the ſame place?* You cite Acts iii. 1. But were not Peter and John together in one place, when going up into the temple, walking together? Next you have Acts iv. 26. of which we have been ſpeaking. Then you bring 1 Cor. xiv. 23. where the evidence of the text obliged our tranſlators, as good grammarians, and as little Independent as yourſelf to render it *in one place*. And then you have Luke xvii. 35. which you may compare with Matth. xxiv. 41. and ſee if you can fetch any argument from thence to exclude *one place* from the meaning of επι το αυτο there. Your grammar upon it, and the various tranſlations of it by learned men, while all muſt own it ſometimes ſignifies *in the ſame place*, ſignify nothing, till one text be produced in the New Teſtament, where it can be proven, that it muſt be tranſlated otherwiſe. And let me tell you, after what I have ſaid, this has never yet been done.

But I had almoſt forgot the new ſtate of your queſtion to me on Acts iv. 26. You put the queſtion again thus, "Whether Herod and Pontius Pilate, the kings of the earth, and "the rulers, were gathered together in one place againſt the "Lord and his Chriſt?" Though this ſtate of it be as little agreeable to the text as the former, and ſo as little needing any anſwer from me; yet becauſe you ſay, that, by my own confeſſion, Herod and Pontius Pilate did not gather together in one place againſt Chriſt, I now think it proper to tell you, that Luke xxiii. 12. hinders me from confeſſing, that theſe whom you call the kings of the earth and the rulers, even Herod and Pontius Pilate, did not meet together in one place againſt Chriſt. And I do not underſtand what you intend by ſaying, "That the people of Iſrael did not gather together "into Pilate's judgment-hall, John xviii. 28." ſeeing your intention cannot be to ſhew, that they were not gathered in one place with Pilate, becauſe you ſaw the contrary in the 29th verſe. I am ſtill of the mind, that they who underſtood επι το αυτο here to ſignify *in this city*, took the meaning

of

of it to be *in one place*; for ſhould it be uſed to ſignify *one ſuch place as a city*, as it would not in that caſe point to one houſe, ſo it would not point to diſtinct places and diſtinct aſſemblies; there behoved to be another word for that, while the meaning of ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ is ſtill *in one place*; and there is no one place to which it can be applied, wherein there are not in ſome ſenſe many places. And when we do not read of the houſe in Jeruſalem where Pilate and the Jews met together, John xviii. 28. 29. yet we are ſure they met ſo as to ſpeak together face to face in that place; and ſo likewiſe did Herod and they.

As to Acts ii. 44. you muſt get another argument to prove that ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ there ſignifies different ſpots or houſes in Jeruſalem, than any that can be drawn from their eating their meat from houſe to houſe, or from their breaking bread in that common eating, plainly diſtinct from the ſacred breaking of bread, and eating the Lord's ſupper in the church, when they were all ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ. Compare 1 Cor. xi.

Ὁμοθυμαδὸν has not the ſame import with ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, but imports, as where you find the two together, Acts ii. 1. the perſonal concurrence of ſeverals in the ſame action, as they of Tyre and Sidon, with whom Herod was diſpleaſed, came to him, that is, the managers and actors in the chief government of Tyre and Sidon. You uſe too much freedom with Acts viii. 6. 10. when you attribute what is ſaid in the 10th verſe to Philip, while it is ſpeaking of the heed given to Simon Magus: for you ſay, "Acts viii. 6. the Samaritans are "ſaid with one accord to give heed to Philip, even from the "leaſt to the greateſt, ℣ 10."

3. You drop your former reaſon why *the whole church*, and *they all*, could not conſtruct; and you differ from the tranſlators, who, by the parentheſis, plainly make for me. And I am ſtill ſurpriſed with your imagination, that you ſpeak according to the judgment of the tranſlators, when you would have the apoſtles within the parentheſis, and the whole church without, dealing with it as you did with Solomon's porch; but now you grant that the whole church was in Solomon's porch; yet you will not let the text ſay ſo. You give a freſh proof of your ability for criticiſm upon this head; for now you bring forth two poſitions in place of the former, to ſhew, that *they all* cannot be conſtructed with *the whole church*. The firſt ſeems to be this, that *the whole church* is not the immediate antecedent of *they all*, and ſo cannot be conſtructed with it. But by this rule, *they all*

cannot be conſtructed with *the apoſtles*, but with *the people*, its immediate antecedent. And if you be to eſtabliſh this as an univerſal rule, That the relative muſt be conſtructed with its immediate antecedent, you will make odd work with the ſcripture, if you make not ſome exceptions; as, for inſtance, 2 Theſſ. ii. 8. 9. Next you tell me, "The relative "and the antecedent muſt be in the ſame gender, and that "where the antecedent is a collective noun." And you affirm, "That the relatives and the antecedents are in the "ſame gender in the texts that I noted down to you;" perhaps imagining, that no reader that underſtands language would trouble himſelf to caſt his eyes on 2 Theſſ. i. 1. 2. 3. And I doubt not but you will affirm, that the relative and antecedent collective noun are in the ſame gender, Acts xxiv. 20. 21. I am clear, from the apoſtle's argument and plain ſcope, that *they*, Acts xv. 11. conſtructs with *fathers*; but the difference of the gender could not hinder *they* to conſtruct with *the nations*, or elſe there is wrong conſtruction in that chapter, which I will not eaſily acknowledge. See, for inſtance, ℣ 17. I muſt tell you, criticiſm requires more ſedate and nice circumſpection, than perhaps either you or I have leiſure or ability for; and we may ſee that it is not ſafe in all caſes to truſt to learned critics, even where they are poſitive: And therefore we may leave it to others of more ability and leiſure, while we are employed to better purpoſe.

You charge me here with ſetting light of the context, and you repeat this ſeveral times in your letter. The foundation of this charge, ſo far as I can underſtand, is, That when you dealt ſo with the text and context, as you deal with Acts viii. 6. 10. I told you what the text ſaid, and did not diſſemble as to the context. And my anſwer to your charge is plainly this, That I am for taking all the help unto the underſtanding of the text that the context will afford me; but I am not for making the context to be the text: And herein I differ from you, who charge me with making light of the context, for no other reaſon that I know, but becauſe I will not ſay, that the context is the text.

4. You ſay, "I thought you was in my mercy as to a "feaſt in Jeruſalem, when Paul went up," Acts xxi.; and ſo you complain of my marking the page in that caſe. And thus, it ſeems, whether I mark your pages or not, you will be ſure to mark my baſe intentions. I own I could not underſtand the ground of your mighty confidence, in demanding a proof for my inſinuation, that there was a feaſt in Jeruſalem

ruſalem when Paul went up; but now I perceive it was your ſkill in metaphyſics, and your ability thereby to deny conſequences, which even an Independent would bluſh to deny. And I have learned, from the ſample of your metaphyſics on this and ſome other heads, that it is in vain for me to impugn you, even though you ſhould deny the plaineſt fact recorded in the ſcriptures.

As to your partial way of quoting Acts ix. 31. to prove the multiplication of the church in Jeruſalem, you do not make any defence of your partiality in citing the text, which was the thing complained of; and ſo I have you convicted on that point, but not ſilenced, as long as you can talk beſide the purpoſe. For, as to that text and Acts xii. 24. you come off, ſaying, "That Jeruſalem had her ſhare," and you make the beſt of that you can; for that city was largeſt, and therefore would then have the largeſt ſhare. But you recover yourſelf fully on this head, and come off in triumph, by means of a proof you have found here for a church in the ſingular number, containing under it many ſingle churches. And this is the argument in your own words, "For it is ſaid, Acts xii. "1. *Herod ſtretched forth his hand to vex certain of the* "*church.* This, I hope, was not only the church in Jeru- "ſalem, nor the church as inviſible, *Quo minime credas gur-* "*gite piſcis erit.*" Your hope here ſeems to be very firm, but what the ground of this hope is, I cannot tell, if it be not this, that "Herod ſtretched forth his hand to vex cer- "tain of all the churches," that could receive additions by the growth and multiplication of the word after he died; or that Herod could not perſecute the inviſible church, no more than Saul could perſecute its inviſible head; and upon ſuch like grounds of hope, you may expect to find your fiſh in any pool, yea, and find it, according to that, *Crede quod habes et habes.*

You give two reaſons, to ſhew, that all the myriads of believing Jews, Acts xxi. were members of the church in Jeruſalem.

The firſt is, "Becauſe they were not ſuch as could bear "any witneſs againſt Paul, but by hearſay; they are inform- "ed of thee." And, to ſtrengthen what you ſay on this head, it ſeems to me that the text diſtinguiſhes the myriads of believing Jews that were zealous of the law, from the Jews among the Gentiles whom Paul taught; and ſo from the believing Jews his diſciples among the Gentiles, who are not declared to be zealous of the law. Yet there were by

by this time multitudes of believing Jews, zealous of the law, throughout Judea and Galilee, and in other parts, (beſide theſe among the Gentiles taught by Paul), who were not members of the church in Jeruſalem; but, in their zeal for the law, were reſorting from time to time to the feaſts in Jeruſalem, and to the feaſt that then was. Now none of the believing Jews, but thoſe that heard him teaching the Jews among the Gentiles, could witneſs againſt him, but by hearſay: and is it probable to you, that all other believing Jews, even all of them that were zealous of the law, were members of the church in Jeruſalem?

Your ſecond reaſon is, "It is plain, thoſe only of Jeruſalem could receive ſatisfaction by Paul's conformity to the "law at that time, and not others." But how is it plain that other believing Jews, zealous of the law, beſide the members of the church in Jeruſalem, were not in Jeruſalem at that time? Have you made it plain, that there was no feaſt at Jeruſalem at that time, and that the believing Jews in other places, zealous of the law, were not there? I thought that the utmoſt drift of all your ſtretches on that head, was to ſhew, that it was poſſible Paul did not get up to Jeruſalem at the time he propoſed, though he made all the haſte he could to be there, or that it did not involve a contradiction to ſay, that, though Paul made haſte on his journey to be at Jeruſalem on the day of Pentecoſt, and though the Jews of Aſia were there at that time, yet there was no feaſt in Jeruſalem at that time. And is it thus plain to you, that thoſe only of Jeruſalem could receive ſatisfaction by Paul's conformity to the law at that time? Or would you ſuffer an Independent to ſee things plain at this rate? But, though it be moſt plain from the ſacred hiſtory, that there was a feaſt in Jeruſalem at that time; yet though there had been none, what readier way was there to ſatisfy all the believing Jews, that were zealous of the law every where, than to ſatisfy thoſe of Jeruſalem, by conforming publicly to the law at that time?

5. You do not meddle with what I ſaid touching your criticiſms on πας το πληθος; and beſide ſome reflections and a complaint about pages, and references to pages of your book, to oblige the reader, perhaps weary of your book before, to read it over again, I find nothing but what is by no means to the purpoſe; namely, that the churches in the firſt three centuries, according to King, were not independent of councils. For the queſtion was, if the πας το πληθος of each

of

of theſe churches came together in one place to obſerve the ordinances of worſhip? And if each of them had but one altar, or many? And if the πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, under the care of a primitive preſbyter or biſhop, came together in one place to eat the Lord's ſupper? And all your anſwer is, they were not independent. I own, as I ſaid before, they were ſome way dependent on councils after the riſe of the one biſhop, and as a conſequent of that; but the one biſhop is with you an innovation, and ſo is that conſequent of it.

6. You call the ſixth inſtance a pitiful point; yet you take ſome pains on it, and I ſhall not put you to further trouble about it. Only, as from this and other inſtances you may learn more modeſty in your aſſertions, ſo I find, when you are extricating yourſelf on this pitiful point, a point of ſome importance caſts up to you. It ſeems ſeveral things were wanting among the diſciples gathered by the goſpel in the ſeveral cities of Crete, who had nothing for the New-Teſtament ſcripture that we have now, but the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, and among the reſt of the things that were wanting, elders or biſhops, moſt neceſſary unto the churches, ſeem to have been wanting in theſe churches. The ſcripture ſpeaks nothing of elders there before, but ſeems to ſay they were wanting: and as little does it ſpeak of Paul's leaving any of his miniſters, the evangeliſts, there but Titus. This ſtraitens you, and you imagine it will ſtraiten me likewiſe. For you ſay, "Then he was to ordain them by himſelf. But "you will firſt give an inſtance in the New Teſtament, that "a ſingle perſon did ordain, and then reconcile ſuch a prac-"tice with Matth. xviii. 20." I am not ſure what you mean by ordination; but becauſe you ſpeak of a ſingle perſon's ordaining, I imagine you take ordination and the impoſition of hands for the ſame thing. And if this be your mind, I muſt differ from you, till I ſee that hands were laid on the firſt elders or biſhops of the firſt Chriſtian church, Acts i.; and till I find that Apollos became a New-Teſtament miniſter by the impoſition of hands, Acts xviii. 26. 27. 28. I do not queſtion that when elders were ordained where there were elders, hands were laid on them; becauſe I find a preſbytery laying hands on deacons when they were ordained, Acts vi. and on an evangeliſt when he was called and ſet apart to that work, 1 Tim. iv. 14. But I am far from being clear to ſay, that ordination conſiſts in the impoſition of hands; neither dare I ſay, that no man is a miniſter of the goſpel, but he that

that is ordained by the impoſition of the hands of a ſcriptural preſbytery.

By this you may ſee, that I am of the mind Titus was not ſingle or alone in the ordination of the elders in Crete, though there was none in office there but himſelf when theſe elders were ordained. And it ſeems plain to me there were no elders ſet among the diſciples in Crete at their firſt converſion; becauſe I reckon the Apoſtle obſerved the ſame rule in ſetting apart of elders or biſhops that he gives to Timothy, 1 Tim. v. 22. And it behoved a biſhop to be no novice, or one newly planted, but one holding faſt the faithful word as he had been taught. Becauſe there was not time ſufficient for ſetting apart biſhops ſo qualified in Crete while the apoſtle could ſtay there, he left Titus behind him to ſupply his place, and do according to his direction, what he himſelf could not ſtay to ſee done. We do not read of any other evangeliſt or officer left there but Titus alone; and where the ſcripture is ſilent, ſo muſt we. So that, if you will have it that Titus laid hands on theſe elders or biſhops in their ordination, then here is an inſtance in the New Teſtament of the laying on of hands in the ordination of elders by no officer but one; yea further, an inſtance of the ordination of elders where it cannot appear there was any bearing office acting in it but one. Neither is there any difficulty in reconciling this with Matth. xviii. 20. where our Lord ſpeaks of two or three elders ſet in a church; and this will never apply to the caſe of a church wanting elders, or deſtitute of a preſbytery, that is, two elders at leaſt. It is the law of Chriſt that makes elders; and the Chriſtians in the ſeveral cities of Crete had that law no otherwiſe but from the mouth of the apoſtle, or Titus his miniſter in his place, and under his direction. But a church now, deſtitute of a preſbytery, and having that law written to them in the New Teſtament, which the Cretians had from the Apoſtle, and from the mouth of Titus, and obſerving that law to their power, may have elders, and get a preſbytery among them, as well as the diſciples in any city of Crete could have elders when Titus was with them.

7. As to the next inſtance, touching the word *brethren*, your buſineſs was to prove, that it denoted always perſons in office, and even when diſtinguiſhed from officers, as Acts xv. or you ſaid nothing to your purpoſe. But have you now manifeſted, that the word *brethren* is any where by itſelf uſed to diſtinguiſh perſons in office from thoſe that are not in office? Nothing like it that I ſee; and I told you before I did not ſee how

how it could be done. You ſay now, "The brethren in "Acts xv. have ſuch work aſcribed them, and are joined "with others in juriſdictional acts, which, in very clear terms, "diſcover they were brethren in office; and on this founda "tion I have called them ſo." But this is only an aſſertion of the grand point to be proved, and you muſt look about for another mean of proof than the import of the word *brethren*, from whence you was bringing a proof for it before. You tell me, you have a ſtrong imagination that the name *brethren* is taken in the ſenſe you have been pleading for, Acts xv. 7.; on which text you propoſe a queſtion to me thus: "Sir, was the choice made among us private perſons?" You alſo anſwer your queſtion, and ſay, "Peter himſelf was "a perſon in office; and this choice was made out of the "multitude, to which he addreſſed himſelf: but if the "choice was made out of this multitude, then theſe out of "which the choice was made muſt be ſuppoſed to be in of- "fice, or in ſome meaſure qualified with him for that office "of preaching to the Gentiles."

Here you acknowledge that Peter, Acts xv. 7. is addreſſing himſelf to that multitude out of which God made choice of him to preach the goſpel firſt to the Gentiles, *i. e.* to Cornelius, and them with him, Acts x. before there was any church of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, or Cilicia. From this I have a ſtrong imagination, that Peter is not addreſſing himſelf to a ſynod, whereof the officers of the churches in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, were conſtitutive members; but to a ſociety that had a being before any church of the Gentiles was, and before there can be any pretence of a ſynod; for you do not ſo much as pretend a ſynod till Acts xv. and I reckon you imagine that you have there the firſt ſynod. And the *us* among whom the choice was made are, as is plain from the whole of Peter's diſcourſe, and from this text, Jews diſtinguiſhed from the Gentiles; ſo that he is neither addreſſing himſelf to the Gentiles perſonally preſent, nor repreſented there; but he is addreſſing himſelf to the company that ſent the epiſtle containing the decrees to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.

Again, by *us* I can imagine no other ſociety to be intended but that ſame which at the beginning received the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, even the firſt church of the Jews, the church in Jeruſalem; which, notwithſtanding of all that had paſſed over it, was ſtill in being when Peter was here ſpeaking; and this my imagination has ſome foundation in the ſituation of

us in ℣ 8. 9. When Peter has done diſcourſing to this ſociety, and thereupon they all gave ear to the information of Paul and Barnabas, James addreſſes them again thus, ℣ 13. "Men and brethren, hearken unto me," ℣ 14. "Simeon "hath declared how God at the firſt did viſit the Gentiles." ℣ 19. "Wherefore my ſentence is, that we trouble not them "which from among the Gentiles are turned to God. But "that we write unto them," *&c.* And when his ſpeech to them is concluded, it is ſaid, ℣ 22. "Then pleaſed it the "apoſtles and elders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen "men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Bar-"nabas." ℣ 23. "And wrote letters by them after this "manner, The apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, ſend greeting "unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles," *&c.* This is that company to which Peter addreſſes himſelf when he ſaid, "Men, brethren, ye know how that God made choice "among us." And theſe are they that received Paul and Barnabas when they were come to Jeruſalem, ℣ 4. Theſe were all brethren, but ſome of them were alſo apoſtles, ſome of them were brethren, and alſo elders or leading men, ηγουμενοι among the brethren; and ſome of them could have no deſignation, importing a diſtinction from others by office; and therefore are called only brethren, ℣ 23.; and this is the whole church, ℣ 22. diſtinguiſhed from the office-bearers, who there get their diſtinguiſhing titles.

Of this company, whereof Peter was one, he ſays, "God "made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth "ſhould hear the word of the goſpel." But you infer from his being in office, and from his being made choice of among them to preach, that it behoved them all to be in office, or qualified with him for that office of preaching to the Gentiles. And, by the ſame kind of reaſoning, you might infer, they were all apoſtles; and ſo might any man infer, from one's being made choice of among the members of the general aſſembly to preach in India, that all the lay-elders and commiſſioners from boroughs are certainly preachers, or qualified for that office of preaching; which, I conceive, would be notoriouſly falſe. And yet we muſt ſee the ſtrength of theſe kind of inferences, or be declared to have caſt off reaſon as a mean of judging of things ſacred. Next, you make the brethren, Acts xxi. 17. to be the ſame thing with the elders, ℣ 18.; for ſtill where brethren and elders are diſtinctly mentioned, you muſt have the word *brethren* to ſignify *elders*. Your reaſon for this is, that the private Chriſti-

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ans were ſtumbled at Paul; and, in order to appeaſe them, he was adviſed to purify himſelf: and it is not eaſy to believe, that it was theſe that received him gladly. But was it not eaſy for you from the text and context, ỳ 19. to believe that his firſt meeting with the elders was after the brethren had received him gladly? And was there any difficulty in believing, that Paul viſited his peculiar friends and acquaintances among the members of the church ſo ſoon as he came to the city, or they him, before he went into James and the elders; and that theſe were not all the multitude whom it behoved to come together, when they ſhould hear that he was come? Further, you might have perceived, that even the elders that received him, and glorified God on account of what he related to them, inſinuated to him, that, according to what was reported of him, he had gone a conſiderable ſtep beyond what they had written and concluded, Acts xv. And they deſire him to let it appear to the people, that he himſelf walked orderly, and kept the law. And here is the iſſue of your criticiſm and reaſoning on the word *brethren*.

8. Upon the next inſtance you are found to own, that you can err, ſo far as not accurately to expreſs a ſentence. And, after this condeſcenſion, you give the ſentence another turn, *i.e.* according to your cuſtom, you put another in the place of it; for you ſay, "Upon a review of it, it ought to have run thus: "yet Judas and Silas were no more members of the church "of Jeruſalem than prophets at Antioch, though ſome time "members there. The plain force of the argument is, that "in Jeruſalem was the firſt Chriſtian church, and from thence "extraordinary officers came, or were ſent by the apoſtles, "to aſſiſt in planting and watering the other churches in the "world." But I am not yet able to perceive the accuracy of your new ſentence, nor the force of your argument, if it be ſtill intended to prove, that the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem, with that whole church, could not ſend Judas and Silas to Antioch; and therefore it muſt have been a ſynod that ſent them. To prove this you alledged before, "That Judas and Silas, though they were of the company "that ordained the decrees, were not members of the church "of Jeruſalem, but prophets at Antioch, and ſome time "members of that church, Acts xiii. 1. 2. 3. and xv. 32. "35. Now, what power, ſaid you, had the elders of Jeru"ſalem to miſſionate Judas and Silas, when they were not "members of that church, but prophets at Antioch, unleſs "they had been a part of that ſynodical meeting?" Theſe

were your words, and this was your argument. But after you yourſelf are forced to withdraw the foundation and ſtrength of it, you ſtill think the force of it remains.

In your new ſentence, which you would have me to think is more accurately expreſſed than the former, you acknowledge, that Judas and Silas were ſome time members of the church of Jeruſalem; and in that which you call the force of your argument, you acknowledge, that from the firſt Chriſtian church in Jeruſalem extraordinary officers came, or were ſent by the apoſtles, to aſſiſt in planting and watering other churches: and I am ſure you do not read of Judas and Silas, ſome time members there, their coming from thence, or being ſent by the apoſtles, to any other church, till Acts xv.

But the force of your argument is, "That when Judas "and Silas became extraordinary officers, they were no more "members of the church in Jeruſalem; and ſo could not be "ſent from thence by the apoſtles and the elders, with the "brethren of that church." Yet if I ſhould tell you, that, at this rate, there were no ordinary officers, having any fixed relation to any church, or members of any particular church in your ſynod, but the elders of the church in Jeruſalem that received Paul and Barnabas when he came there; you would readily anſwer me, according to your ſcheme and way of arguing on Acts xv. That they all acted there as elders related to the particular churches from which they were ſent, and that were repreſented by them in the ſynod. And when you uſe to take it ſo ill, that any ſhould ſpeak of extraordinary officers acting as ſuch in that aſſembly, Acts xv. you ought yourſelf to beware of conſidering extraordinary officers as ſuch in that paſſage, and of betaking yourſelf to that ſhift, which you would have us believe is but a pitiful one when uſed by your adverſaries. According to the notion I have of the ſynod you plead for in Acts xv. it had as little power to commiſſionate extraordinary officers as ſuch, as you can pretend the particular church in Jeruſalem had. And I deſire you, if you will maintain your ſcheme, to keep by it, and ſpeak conſiſtently with it; which I humbly conceive will recommend it more than this your way. Now, though men endued with extraordinary gifts, might perhaps uſe a greater liberty in going from one church to another, where there was more need and uſe for the exerciſe of their gift, as Silas choſe to remain at Antioch; yet did they not act their part as members of that particular church where they reſided ordinarily,

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as Paul and Barnabas at Antioch? And had not that church power to ſend them, as the teachers as well as prophets in the church at Antioch ſent away Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiii.; and if the church in Antioch had power to commiſſionate Paul and Barnabas to Jeruſalem, had not the church in Jeruſalem as much power to ſend Judas and Silas members there unto Antioch? And if the extraordinary gift made them no members, and ſo not capable to be ſent, was not the caſe the ſame with Paul and Barnabas at Antioch?

Becauſe propheſying, with you, does not make a perſon an officer, but being called a prophet, and becauſe that extraordinary gift, when beſtowed, made a man, according to you, no more a member of the particular church where he was before; let me inquire, for my own ſatisfaction, if theſe prophets that propheſied by revelation, 1 Cor. xiv. 29. 30. 31. 32. were then members of that church; and if they were all church-officers and elders in that church while they propheſied in it? the reaſon of my queſtion is, That I find none debarred from the exerciſe of that gift in that church and its aſſemblies, but women; and though the members did not all propheſy, as they did not all ſpeak with tongues; yet the Apoſtle ſays, "He would they all ſpake with tongues, but "rather that they propheſied," ℣ 5. & 31. And I am not ready to think, that he would have the whole church to be elders. Till I be ſome way cleared as to this, I can never be ſatisfied, that it can be inferred from Judas and Silas their being endued with the gift of prophecy in the church at Jeruſalem, and ſo called *prophets*, that they were elders. As it cannot be denied, that there were elders in the firſt churches that had the gift of prophecy, and ſo were prophets; ſo it would not be eaſy to prove, that brethren that were no elders had not that gift, and that they that had that gift in any meaſure could not be called prophets. Whether Judas and Silas were of the one ſort or the other, it alters not the caſe to me, ſo as either way to do the leaſt ſervice to your cauſe or your argument. For if you will affirm they were elders, from the word ἡγουμένοι, applied to them, Acts xv. 22. compared with Heb. xiii. 7. 17. then you can no more infer, that the brethren among whom they were ἡγουμένοι, were alſo ἡγουμένοι, than you can infer from 1 Pet. v. that the people, among whom were theſe elders, were alſo elders. Thus I have attended to you in your critical lucubrations, ſerving to ſupport your ſcheme of a ſynod on Acts xv. For as to what you ſay, according to your diſtinction of *at* and *of*, upon

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Acts xvi. 2. 4. and Acts xv. 2. I have told you enough before.

And ſo I come, in the laſt place, on this head, to ſee if you come off any better with your criticiſms on the import of the word *church*. And here I wanted you ſhould prove to me, that the diſciples of Chriſt throughout the world are any otherwiſe called the church, but in ſo far as, in the judgment of charity, they may be reckoned to be of the "general aſſembly "and church of the firſt-born." But all the proof I find is in the poſitions you are pleaſed to lay down, after my theſis, touching the diſtinction betwixt the inviſible and the viſible church: from which poſitions you infer, in the cloſe, that when Chriſt gave officers to his church, it was not to her as inviſible, but as viſible. I ſhall take the trouble to go over theſe poſitions, becauſe it ſeems to me you imagine, they contain a confutation of my theſis, and alſo clear your way to the vindication of the texts you have brought to prove a catholic church viſible.

As to what you ſay, in the firſt place, of the twofold vocation or calling, the one merely external by the word, the other internal and inviſible by the Spirit: If you mean any other call of the Spirit, but his enabling a ſinner to comply with the word, and that by means of the word itſelf, I cannot aſſent to it. Neither do I ſee that the diſtinction here laid down by you is in the two branches of it ſo comprehenſive as it ought to be: for beſides that which you call merely external, and the internal, mentioned Rom. viii. 30. I conceive an influence of the word and Spirit upon ſome, that yet, in the iſſue, prove reprobates, which goes further than merely external calling; for your merely external calling is unto them that make light of it, and perſecute the ſervants, as well as to them that are gathered together by it, and come as gueſts to the wedding; and among theſe again you find ſome not having the "wedding-garment," Matth. xxii. 2. to 14.

Next, You tell me, that, agreeable to this twofold call, there is a twofold faith, the one common, which is to be found in the reprobate, Acts viii. 13. Matth. xiii. 20. the other ſaving, and only in the elect, Tit. i. 1. Gal. v. 6. And if you reckon this faith twofold, in reſpect of the object or thing believed, as if there were one faith of the external call of the word, and another faith of the internal call of the Spirit, I cannot aſſent to it. I am for no faith but the faith of the word. But if you mean a faith proceeding from the call

call of the word, as it is merely external, without any concurring influence of the Spirit upon mens ſouls, engaging them any way to comply with it, there is no ſuch faith ſpoken of in the texts you cite for it. The ſcripture does indeed ſpeak of "the devils their believing and trembling;" but the difference between that common faith and ſaving faith of the goſpel, ariſes not from your difference betwixt the call merely external and the call internal by the Spirit; but from the difference betwixt the common and ſaving influence of that ſame Spirit, by that ſame goſpel, upon the ſouls of men. And if your diſtinction betwixt the viſible and inviſible church ſtand upon this twofold faith, then the objects of the goſpel-call that come not the length even of the common faith, which may be found in the reprobate, are not members of the viſible church.

Then you ſpeak of a twofold ſanctity or holineſs, the one external and federal, Ezra ix. 2. Rom. xi. 16. 1 Cor. vii. 4. the other internal and abſolute, which is only to be found in the regenerate, Pſal. xciii. 5. And I own there is a twofold holineſs, typical, as that of the whole nation of Iſrael, and real or true, as that of the heavenly nation, or kingdom of heaven, the antitype of that earthly nation; but both theſe are federal. Again, there is a real holineſs, as there is a real covenant-relation betwixt God and all the true children of the kingdom of heaven, that are "born from above," and upon whoſe hearts he writes his Law. And there is an apparent holineſs, as there is an apparent covenant-relation betwixt God and all them whom he calls us to look upon as children of the kingdom of heaven, and points out to us in his word as objects of brotherly love; and this is the appearance of the real, as it can appear to us in this world, and both theſe are to me intended Pſal. xciii. 5. But how you come to call the external only federal, I cannot underſtand.

Further, you tell me, "That, anſwerable to theſe, there "is a twofold communion allowed to ſuch as are within the "bond of the covenant, the one merely in its external pri-"vileges, and the other in thoſe which are ſaving alſo." If you mean a communion in the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, and the appearance of that, as in baptiſm, which belongs to every viſible member of the true myſtical catholic body of Chriſt, and to none elſe; a communion in the body and blood of Chriſt, and a communion in that bread and cup which it ſhews forth; a communion in the one faith, or in that

that word whereby we are united to Chriſt, as it is believed in the heart, and a communion in it as it is confeſſed with the mouth; a communion in the Spirit of Chriſt, as he is the worker of faith in the heart, and a communion in that Spirit as he is the author and worker of gifts, and enables us to make the ſcriptural confeſſion of that faith. I ſay, if this be your meaning, you ſay well; but theſe two communions have a very near relation to one another. And while any perſon has a right, according to Chriſt's law, to that which you call a communion merely in external privileges, neither you nor I have any ground to think otherwiſe of that perſon, but that he has communion in thoſe privileges which you call ſaving; for when their profeſſion in the event proves falſe to us, then as to us they have no right to the external communion. You ſay, "That theſe that have a right to the external commu-"nion, are ſome way ſaid to be ingrafted into Chriſt, though "they do not abide in him, nor bring forth fruit, John xv. "2. 6." But if they be ſome way ſaid to be in Chriſt himſelf, according to that ſcripture, and Rom. x. 7. 8. John iv. 15. *&c.* may they not in that ſame way be ſaid to be in that catholic myſtical church, which is his body? And as theſe who are thus in Chriſt are ſaid to be taken away, ſo we are told, that Chriſt, at his coming, will gather out of his kingdom "all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Theſe, therefore, were in that his kingdom, which ſtill ſtands after they are gathered out of it, that is, the holy heavenly kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt; and they are taken out of it as the fruitleſs branches in Chriſt are taken away from him, and as the man, among the gueſts at the wedding, wanting the wedding-garment, is taken away from among the gueſts, and from the wedding. Thus, this one text brought by yourſelf, ſerves at once to eſtabliſh my theſis, and to overthrow your arguings for a catholic viſible church, drawn from theſe ſcriptures that ſpeak of perſons being in the church and kingdom of Chriſt, who yet are not elect, and believe not with that true and lively faith that worketh by unfeigned love.

9. Laſtly, You lay down this poſition, "That from all "theſe conſiderations, there ariſeth alſo a twofold face, "or form of the church of Chriſt here on earth, the one "viſible, which conſiſts in an open profeſſion of the "Chriſtian faith, and practice of the duties of worſhip; the "other ſpiritual, inviſible, and myſtical, which owes its ori-"ginal to election, and is conſummate in a lively faith, which "worketh by love." What you mean by the ſpiritual, inviſible,

viſible, and myſtical face or form of the church of Chriſt here on earth, I confeſs I do not underſtand: But not to inſiſt on the words wherein you expreſs the diſtinction, I ſhall tell you how far I own a diſtinction on this ſubject, according to what I have before laid down. There is one holy catholic church made up of all them in heaven and on the earth that are born of the Spirit; and this church is not itſelf to be ſeen till Chriſt appear; yet of this church every one in the earth that is, according to the law of Chriſt, an object of the Chriſtian brotherly love, is a viſible member, and is, to us, in that church by the law of Chriſt, and, as ſuch, has a right to baptiſm, wherein we are all baptiſed into that one body; but many that are ſuch, prove, in the iſſue, to have been no real members of that body, though they were viſible members of it. There is alſo a church, conſiſting of viſible members of the heavenly church, viſibly joined together in the profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith, hope, and charity, and aſſembling together in one place to partake of the Lord's ſupper, and to obſerve all Chriſt's inſtitutions continuing ſtedfaſtly together in them; and in every ſuch viſible church, the myſtical church is ſhewed forth and repreſented to us; but, beſides this, I do not know of any viſible face or form of a church upon the earth.

You tell me that your diſtinction is pointed out to us by the Apoſtle, John ii. 19. "They went out from us, but were "not of us. They went out from us," that is, ſay you, from the viſible aſſembly of thoſe who profeſſed Chriſtianity. But they were of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity; and the Apoſtle ſays, "they went out from us" of whom they were not, but appeared to be; and their going out manifeſted them not to be of *us*, of whom, if they had been really as they once appeared, they would no doubt have continued with *us*. So that the *us* from whom they went, are the very ſame with the *us* of whom they were not; that is, by your own acknowledgment, the ſociety of the elect that are effectually called. And they went out from them, by going from that whereby they appeared to be of them, *i. e.* the right goſpel-profeſſion, and when they were gone, the Apoſtle reckoned all them that held faſt the goſpel profeſſion to be of that ſociety, of which whoſoever really is, they will continue. Wherefore this ſcripture, if you will conſider it a little more narrowly, is indeed a great ſupport to my theſis, and anſwers to the poſitions as I have laid them down; but not to yours, nor to your catholic viſible church.

In the concluſion of your poſitions, you own what you ſeemed before to impugn, *viz.* "That it is agreeable to the "nature of this ſecret ſtate of man, which is only certainly "known to God, to diſcover itſelf ſo far as to give a cre- "dible ground of charity." But you add, "yet not ſo as if "it could be diſcovered in all by poſitive determination to be "really different from its counterfeits." And upon this I would aſk you, when you come to have that credible ground of charity, are you not bound to exerciſe that "charity that "thinketh no evil? And who gave you power to go about to judge in a matter wherein God alone can judge, *i. e.* to diſcover it in any to be really different from its counterfeits? And ſeeing this neither can nor ought to be done by you, are not you charitably to judge it to be real and not counterfeit, while you have the credible ground of charity? Are not you therefore bound to look upon every one in whom this credible ground of charity is found, as a member of the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, and act toward him accordingly as did the apoſtles?

But after all, how flows this inference of yours from your poſitions? "Thus when Chriſt gave officers to his church, it "was not to her as inviſible but as viſible." Your next miſſive, if you condeſcend to continue the correſpondence, muſt ſatisfy us as to that.

Having laid down theſe things, you come next to the vindication of the texts attacked by me, as not importing a viſible but an inviſible church. But all that I ſay is, that they do not import a catholic viſible church diſtinct from the holy catholic myſtical church, and from the viſible churches of the ſaints, in every one of which that inviſible catholic body is ſhewed forth: And till you prove, that theſe texts can neither be underſtood of the one or the other of theſe, nor both, you cannot find your catholic viſible church in them.

You begin with the firſt, which is, 1 Cor. i. 2. connected with 1 Cor. xii. 28. and paſſing, for your own eaſe, what I ſay on that connection, under the notion of angry words and invectives, you contend, that it is your political catholic body that is meant, 1 Cor. xii. and not the inviſible or myſtical body. And you ſay ſeveral things in the proof of this. It is evident, ſay you, in that there were apoſtles, prophets, and teachers, ſet in this church, that it is not meant of the inviſible or myſtical body. This was ſaid before and anſwered; and the mere repetition of it cannot take off the anſwers. But you think you add, when you alledge, that the myſtical body

body is not political, *i. e.* as I take it, it has not the gifts of apoſtles, prophets, teachers, ſet in it, and is not this a mighty addition? That it is your catholic body political that is meant, you ſeem to prove thus: for, ſay you, Chriſt is the head by his ſpecial guidance and means, and the diſpenſation of his ordinances no leſs than myſtical by his ſpiritual influences. By which it ſeems you reckon Chriſt is not the head of the myſtical church, or the church of the firſt-born by his ſpecial guidance and means, and the diſpenſation of ordinances, and that he is not the head of any viſible church, but only of the myſtical, by his ſpiritual influences. Or if this be not what you are ſaying, let any man declare to me what you are ſaying to the purpoſe.

When you have repeated your aſſertion, contrary to plain ſcriptures brought to you in the Obſervations, that apoſtles, prophets, and teachers are not ſet in the myſtical body of Chriſt; you tell me, for the ſame reaſon it is not the ſingle church of Corinth that is meant. For what reaſon was not that church a political church, as you ſpeak? And were not theſe offices ſet in it as they were alſo before in the firſt viſible goſpel church in Jeruſalem? Yea, has not every ſuch church, to the end of the world, the apoſtles and prophets, that has the New Teſtament, as the church of the Jews in the time of our Lord, had Moſes and the prophets, and has not every ſuch church, by the law of Chriſt, teachers in it explaining upon the word of the apoſtles and prophets? You ſay the apoſtles which were ſet in this church were catholic officers, and had not their relation reſtricted to any particular church, having the whole world for their charge. This was all ſaid and anſwered before; and ſtill it ſeems your catholic church and the whole world are one and the ſame; but when theſe officers, to whom it ſeems you reckon it was peculiar not to have a reſtricted relation to any particular church, are gone; where is their charge? Or who ſucceeds them in that wherein they were diſtinguiſhed from the paſtors or elders, or biſhops of particular churches? But you have another argument on this text, which is, "They themſelves "were viſible meſſengers, and ſome of them no more but "only viſible," and, "that which is inviſible cannot, under "that notion, have a viſible miniſtry ſet into it." To this I anſwer, Is it mainly the men or the offices, the men or the gifts, that are ſpoke of in that text or context, and ſaid to be ſet in the church? And had not theſe offices and gifts a real

action upon the invisible body, and invisible as well as visible effects?

As the gifts of apostles, prophets, and evangelists had invisible effects in the first joining together of the invisible or mystical body of Christ, so has the gift of pastors and teachers upon this body in the edifying of it "till all its members "come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of "the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure "of the stature of the fulness of Christ." For this purpose these gifts had, and still have an influence on the unbelieving world, which is not the church, to gather men out of it, and bring them to the faith and the confession of it, and so add them both invisibly and visibly to the catholic mystical church; and thus these offices and gifts have both visible and invisible effects. They serve to gather men out of the world into the mystical church, and into the visible churches of the saints where they have an influence upon them, to confirm and stablish them, to make them grow in the "unity of the faith "till they come to a perfect man." And before these offices and gifts, which were given unto the catholic mystical church, and for it, had influence upon the world, they were first set in a particular visible church of the saints; and from such churches their influence went out into the world, as I shewed you in the Observations. You next bring me the testimony of Hooker; as to which, I have told you something before, which I need not now repeat. And then you conclude what you have to say in vindication of your sense of this text, by telling me again what you think only makes a man a member of the body mystical, and that my judgment of charity can neither add nor pare in that point.

Truly, Sir, I am scarce able to discern what account you make of a person, in your judgment of charity about him; but I may know this, that if my judgment of charity, or your's either, be according to the law and rule of that judgment laid down by Jesus Christ in his word, we account every person a member of Christ and his mystical body of whom we make that judgment; and so he is to us a member of that body by the law of Christ: so that, in doing the deeds of brotherly love to that person, we do them to Christ the head, and to the whole body; and in persecuting any one whom we that cannot search mens hearts, are bound, by Christ's law, to look upon as a member of Christ, we are persecutors of that whole body. Men are not visible members of Christ and of his mystical body, according to your fancy

fancy or mine either, and our judgment can neither add nor pare as to his law in that point. It is his law that determines this matter to us, and requires of us accordingly, as we ſhall be anſwerable to him in that day, when what you here alledge will not ſtand for an excuſe to us, in not looking upon his viſible members, the leaſt of them, as ſuch, and in neglecting the duties of love to them, as to himſelf. It will be then but a mean ſhift to ſay, "When ſaw we thee," *&c.*

On Eph. iii. 10. you give me the ſame things over again; only you ſay, the body, ℣ 7. and Col i. 24. is your viſible catholic body, becauſe Paul was a miniſter of it, as I ſay he was a miniſter of the inviſible head of the myſtical body; and becauſe he ſuffered for it, as I ſay he "endured all things for "the elects ſakes," 2 Tim. ii. 10.; but perhaps you will alledge, they were inviſible ſufferings that he endured for the elect's ſakes, becauſe they are inviſible. But the body, Eph. iii. 7. is the ſame of which the Apoſtle had been ſpeaking, Eph. i. 10. 22. 23. and ii. 15. 16. and the body, chap. iv. 11. 12. is no other. So likewiſe the body whereof Paul calls himſelf a miniſter, and for which he ſuffered, Col. i. 24. 25. is that ſame of which he had been ſpeaking, ℣ 18. 19. 20. And if you thus regard the context, you will ſee that Paul was a miniſter of the myſtical body; and ſo you may add theſe texts to the text I gave you before, Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.

When you come to 1 Cor. x. 32. you turn the proof upon me, to whom you was proving your catholic viſible church from this text; and ſay, becauſe it is not proven to be the myſtical church that is meant, therefore you take it for the body catholic viſible. But you cannot make your catholic body viſible to me in this text, till you prove, that it can neither be meant of the body myſtical, nor of a particular church, nor of both: and this is what you have not yet done. You ſay the precepts here are negative and indefinite; and from this you infer, that they bind *ſemper et ad ſemper*, and muſt at the ſame time reſpect all places and perſons. Well, what then? You ſay further, "In theſe travelling "times, ſome might give offence in one place, and ſome in "another, and one in many places." And what is the conſequence of that? You ſay, "The whole body was li-"able to offence, though it was not by one man;" and ſo the object is ſet down indefinitely, thereby to comprehend the whole. Thus you think you have manifeſted, that it is not the myſtical body that is meant. But this whole myſti-

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cal body is liable to offence, either by one man, or many men: for as when one apparent member of it is offended, the body is offended, ſo likewiſe when many; and the whole may be offended, even as the inviſible head: and whether one man give it offence thus, or as many men, in as many places of the earth as the viſible members of it are to be found, ſtill the whole is offended, as I told you. For what I ſaid of one is applicable to as many viſible members of that true church as are any where offended, and as many as in all places and all times offend them.

When a man, or as many men as you pleaſe, offend a viſible church, wherein that myſtical body is ſhewed forth, they remarkably offend the myſtical body, even as love to that body is moſt remarkably manifeſted in the deeds of love towards the repreſentation of it in ſuch a church. Thus the Corinthians, in offending the church of God in Corinth, whereof they were members, were capable of offending the whole myſtical church; and what is ſaid of it is applicable to any other church of the ſame kind, where Chriſtians happen to be, as I told you. And I am ſtill perſuaded, that what is ſaid to the church in Corinth is applicable to every ſuch church to the end of the world. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of their judging, and of his judging them that were within, in oppoſition to theſe without: and as the church in Corinth judged only its own members, ſo the Apoſtle is ſpeaking of his judging a member of that church as if he had been preſent. And it does not appear that the apoſtles exerciſed church-diſcipline but upon church-members, nor that they exerciſed it any where elſe but in a church where they happened to be, and acted as elders, 3 John 10. And if they had to do with many churches, it was becauſe they were unto them in place of the New Teſtament, that every church has now complete. And if in this ſenſe you ſay the churches are one, becauſe they have one New Teſtament, as the viſible rule of their government, I never reclaimed againſt this.

But ſtill I am to ſeek as to the viſible catholic body intended in this text. You ſay it is only the viſible church that is capable of offence, and to receive ſatisfaction. But was not the viſible church in Corinth, and is not any other ſuch church, capable of offence, and of receiving ſatisfaction? And is not the catholic body myſtical every way as capable of offence and ſatisfaction in its viſible members, through whom it is injured in offence and perſecution, as you can imagine your viſible body to be! You will perhaps tell me, they all receive

receive ſatisfaction in their repreſentatives, a general or catholic council. Yes, when that aſſembles and agrees about being offended and ſatisfied. But the head of the body myſtical, and that body is ſatisfied when a ſinner repents and obſerves the law of Chriſt, the rule of repentance. Yea, there is joy in that part of the church that is leaſt viſible to us "over one ſinner that repenteth," or over a returning backſlider; and that is now by far the greateſt and moſt conſiderable part of this church. And you will find the Lord, in ſpeaking of offences among the viſible members of this church or kingdom of heaven, ſome way referring to this, and to the concern that "the innumerable company of angels" that belongs to this heavenly ſociety have in this matter, Matth. xviii. 10. He ſpeaks of the kingdom of heaven, into which none can enter "except they be converted, and become as "little children." He ſpeaks of our "receiving or offend-"ing any one of theſe little ones," (who you ſay cannot be ſeen, and ſo not received or offended, and deſpiſed by us), and therein receiving or offending him and their father, and "the innumerable company of angels." He calls others beſides theſe whom he would have us to account converted, "and the children of this kingdom, and of his father, the "world." When he ſpeaks of a viſible church, he ſpeaks of it as conſiſting of theſe, and theſe only, whom he would have us to account ſuch children; and therefore our brethren, and when they diſcover themſelves not to be ſuch, in treſpaſſing and not hearing the viſible church, whereof they are members, he bids us look upon them as the Jews did on Heathen men and publicans, and ſo not "children of the "kingdom of heaven;" and he declares, that what they "bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven, and what they "looſe on earth ſhall be looſed in heaven." And after all this, will you yet ſay, that it is only the viſible church that is capable of offence, and to receive ſatisfaction? And this for the ſake of an imagination about a catholic viſible church, which I dare ſay has ſerved as much to the offending of the kingdom of heaven, and the injuring of its little ones, and to the ruin of the viſible churches of them, as any thought that ever came in the mind of man?

On Heb. ii. 12. you complain of want of cloſeneſs in my arguing, and ſo put the proof again upon me. But why ſhould I be complained of for want of proof on this head? You affirmed your viſible body catholic is in this text, and you did not more. Do you imagine, that every thing that you ſay

ſay and I deny is truth, unleſs I prove the contrary? Is it enough for you to affirm, and muſt I prove? I referred to John xvii. 26. becauſe the text ſpeaks of the declaration of the Father's name to Chriſt's brethren, and not to the world; but you will not explain ſcripture by ſcripture, which I took to be the cloſeſt way of doing; and you ſpeak of the declaration of his name by Chriſt to his brethren, and explain it ſo as to be as much the privilege of all the world as of his brethren, to whom he ſhews the Father, "and manifeſts "himſelf ſo as he does not to the world." For here again you tell of the declaration of God's name to all the world by the apoſtles; from which, after your cuſtom, you infer, it could not be a congregation; for ſtill you make the world and your viſible church the ſame. And it ſeems you imagine, that as many as the apoſtles preached to were Chriſt's brethren. You ſay, "That Pſal. xxii. contains a prophecy of "the viſibility of the catholic church under the New Teſta-"ment, and ſo do other Old-Teſtament ſcriptures." And I am alſo of the mind that the true catholic and myſtical body of Chriſt is declared in the New Teſtament to be viſible, in every way wherein the Old-Teſtament prophecies foretold it ſhould be ſo. I have told you once and again, how far I think the New Teſtament ſays it is viſible. And till you ſhew me ſome other church in the New Teſtament beſide the myſtical body, and a congregation of its viſible members, (except the great whore, and the harlots that are come of her, and alſo "commit fornication with the kings of the "earth," alſo foretold in the Old Teſtament), I muſt look upon your underſtanding the prophecies, to ſignify a catholic viſible church of divine inſtitution, as a private interpretation; and apply the prophecies only as the author of them directs me in the New Teſtament, where he explains them.

On 1 Tim. iii. 15. which is your laſt text, you tell me, I take it for granted, that the church is the little habitation of God at Epheſus. But you ſay, 1. The church here muſt be viſible; and was not that little habitation of God, the church in Epheſus, viſible? 2. You ſay it muſt be an organiſed church, becauſe of the directions about biſhops and deacons. But was not the viſible church in Epheſus an organiſed church with biſhops and deacons? 3. You ſay, "It was not the "church of Epheſus, ſeeing the epiſtle was written to Timo-"thy an evangeliſt, who had not a fixed reſidence in any "particular church," &c. But was not the epiſtle directed to Timothy then abiding at Epheſus, by the apoſtle's intreaty and

and direction, chap. 1. ℣ 3. And are not these the very words of the Apostle to him, in chap. 3. ℣ 14. after he had been giving him directions about bishops and deacons, and in the text, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come "unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayst "know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of "God, which is the church of the living God?" What easy work would I have, if you would once learn to consider the context, and what light it affords to the understanding of the text! 4. As to what you say in the next place, as I see no argument brought against any thing I have alledged, in the place of your book to which you refer; so the argument has not appeared to me that manifests any church to be meant in this text but the mystical body represented in a particular church. 5. In the last place, you go about to vindicate yourself from something very like a contradiction, and appeal to the candid reader. Will the candid or uncandid reader have the brow to deny, that Paul called elders of the church in Ephesus, "To take heed to all the flock, over the which "the Holy Ghost made them overseers, to feed the church "of God which he purchased with his own blood?" Or can any reader deny that you said, in answer to an argument of mine, This is not the visible, but the invisible church, which can only be said to be purchased with the blood of God, and that you insisted on this at some length?

And now, when your whole arguings for your visible church depend upon this proposition, That officers cannot feed the invisible church, let the candid reader, or any other reader, tell me, what is the sense of your evasion as expressed in these words: "I held the church, in which the elders were "set, to be visible, though every thing there be not spoken "of it as visible." Will he tell me you mean these elders were set in the visible church in Ephesus, to feed the invisible catholic church? Or will he perceive that you mean that these visible officers were to feed some members of the invisible church, and, in feeding them, feed that church? Or will he perceive easily, that you mean the invisible church was represented or shewed forth in the visible church in Ephesus? I dare say he will not, in a consistency with what you have been saying in the proof of your visible catholic church, if he be at all a reader. Then let him tell me, if he easily perceive it, or even reach it by the utmost stretch of the most sublimely-metaphysical thought, what you mean by the visible church, wherein these elders were set as invisible? or what you mean by the church of Ephesus as visible, and as invi-

ſible? And this the end of your efforts to make your catholic viſible church, and not the inviſible, nor any particular viſible church, viſible to me in theſe texts. And, after all that we have been ſaying, if it be viſible to any reader, I ſhall declare him a reader ſo far beyond me in ſeeing, that I ſhall not preſume to offer any more on the ſubject to his view. You tell me, you could give ſeveral other texts, or reaſons, I know not which, beſides; and I wiſh I could hear them; but I am pretty confident I may paſs this as a flouriſh to the ignorant reader.

You ſay, you have juſtly alledged, Eph. iv. and Rom. xii. As to both which I have ſaid as much in the obſervations as ſatisfies me, that it is not in your power to prove your catholic viſible church from either or both of them; and that they both intend quite another thing. But, leſt a contradiction ſhould ariſe upon you as to Eph. iv. you tell me, "Though you own ſtill, that the apoſtles, prophets, evangeliſts, and paſtors, were given intentionally to feed the "myſtical and inviſible body of Chriſt; yet ſtill they were "ſet in the church as viſible, under which view of it there "is a mixture both of good and bad." But were they given intentionally to feed that which, according to you, they could not feed? Could viſible miniſters feed that church which is inviſible? What then becomes of your argument againſt their being ſet in the myſtical church? And if they were given to feed it, why may not theſe gifts be ſaid to be ſet in it for that purpoſe? As I have given you ſeveral ſcriptures, by which you may ſee they were ſet in the myſtical body of Chriſt; ſo I think I have made it appear, they were ſet in the churches or congregations of the ſaints, where I own there are good and bad, but not viſibly good and bad. And you have not yet made any other church viſible to me in the New Teſtament where they could be ſet.

Upon my inquiring, why are not the children to be reputed members of the myſtical body, if one of the parents be to be ſo reputed? you anſwer ſeveral things; as, 1. It is not our reputation of them that conſtitutes them members of that body. But if the law of Chriſt command us to reſpect them as ſuch, they are ſuch to us, and that by Chriſt's law, as I have told you before; and you have not found another catholic church whereof to repute them members, but that myſtical body of Chriſt whereinto we are baptiſed, even as we are baptiſed into Chriſt. 2. You ſay the children of profeſſing parents, whether believers or unbelievers, are to be baptiſed.

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If you mean believers or unbelievers, and ſo members of the myſtical church or not, in the ſight of God, it is true; but if you mean in the ſight of men, according to the law of Chriſt, it is moſt falſe; for they are not profeſſing parents, if they be not believers, and members of the myſtical church in the ſight of men, according to that law. I know there is a good argument for the baptiſm of the infant-ſeed of them whom the New Teſtament commands us to look upon as the true Iſrael, drawn from the circumciſion of the infant-ſeed of the typical Iſrael, or Iſrael after the fleſh, Acts ii. 38. 39. Col. ii. 11. 12.; but not in the way you draw it. For it cannot be proven, that theſe who are externally in the Chriſtian church, are either externally or internally under that covenant that was made peculiarly with all Iſrael after the fleſh; nor can it be proven, that the children of any parent under the New Teſtament, come into the world by virtue of ſuch a promiſe as that by virtue of which the children of Abraham according to the fleſh were born. 3. Then you infer, that, becauſe baptiſm is catholic, therefore the partakers of it have their freedom to that whole corporation or kingdom, and have at leaſt a right to all its external privileges. But have you manifeſted that baptiſm, the ſign and ſeal of our ingrafting into Chriſt, belongs to any catholic ſociety but the myſtical body, or the true church and kingdom of heaven? Or have you made it appear, that we are baptiſed into any particular church, or that it of itſelf, without more, gives a right to the privileges of any particular church? Or have you made it your buſineſs to confute what I ſaid on this head? Nothing like it that I can ſee; but you take your principle of a catholic viſible organiſed body for granted, and that this is the body into which we are baptiſed; and then draw your inferences.

When I deſire you may ſhew me where, but in your own head, all the profeſſors of the name of Chriſt are united together in the unity of one eccleſiaſtical government?

You, 1. refer me to a part of your book that by no means ſhews me where; but ſhews your fondneſs that appears throughout your Review to have your tedious book more narrowly conſidered and diligently read, as if there were ſome myſteries and depths of reaſon and wiſdom in it that we could not fathom at firſt view.

2. You deny that either you or any Preſbyterian aſſerted, that the church catholic viſible, is one external, ſtated and actual ſociety. I muſt therefore think that you have not been

aſſerting and endeavouring to prove, that the catholic church viſible is one external ſociety, but that it is an internal ſociety or nothing; not that it is a ſtated ſociety, but an unſtated ſociety, or a ſociety that has not the ſtate of a ſociety; nor that it is an actual ſociety, or one actually; but you ſay, it is ſufficient, if it be one habitually. Well then, it is an habitual, but not an actual ſociety; it is habitually one, but never actually one. And till you explain this your diſtinction, as here applied, I muſt ſay, it is the moſt inconceivable ſociety, to be a viſible one, that ever I yet heard of.

3. Then you tell me, that "though we cannot actually "and at one view, ſee all the members of the catholic "church; yet this will never be a good argument they are "inviſible." But I was not inquiring about the members of the viſible church, according to your way of ſpeaking, or all the viſible members of the church, according to mine. My inquiry was, where they are united in the unity of one viſible eccleſiaſtic government? To this you anſwer, all the viſible members are viſible. I own what you ſay, that all the countries in the terraqueous globe, are no leſs viſible than our own country, even as I own that all the viſible churches in the world are no leſs viſible than that whereof I am a member; but if all theſe countries were united any where in the unity of one viſible civil government, I would not be in a great ſtrait to tell where. And I ſee the churches as little dependent on any one viſible catholic eccleſiaſtical government, as I ſee all the countries of the world depending upon one catholic civil government.

But you ſay, "I conceive you mean an univerſal idea or "genus which has no other exiſtence but in your own "brain." And ſo you proceed to propoſe ſome queſtions about this univerſal idea. This is not a proper place for diſcuſſing the queſtion, If there be any univerſal idea? and therefore without troubling myſelf or you about that, I ſhall give my anſwers to your three queſtions. And, 1. Your catholic viſible church can have no officers given to it, but in your brain; becauſe it has no exiſtence without your brain; and a political body, as you ſay, is ſomething real. 2. I likewiſe acknowledge, that it has no actual exiſtence, no being in nature without your brain, till you ſhew me where it is united but there. 3. And, for the ſame reaſon, I deny that it has members. There are viſible members of the real catholic church; there are alſo members of theſe viſible churches, in every one of which that catholic church is ſhewed forth; but

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I cannot ſee that theſe are parts of a catholic church viſible, till I ſee that they were ever or ſhall be united in one viſible catholic government of divine inſtitution.

Upon my refuſing, that the churches ſcattered through Pontus, Galatia, *&c.* are expreſsly called the "flock of "God," and that the elders are conjunctly called to feed or rule that "one flock;" you tell me I ought to have replied to your queſtion, whether this flock was one, becauſe they aſſembled in one place for public worſhip? Or on account of their being united under one eccleſiaſtic government, or their having a right and inherent power ſo to do? but it was time enough for me to anſwer this queſtion, when I owned that all the Chriſtians in theſe parts are called "one flock" by themſelves, as the Chriſtians in the city of Epheſus under the overſight of the elders there, are called "the flock." So I denied the foundation of your queſtion, and gave good reaſons from the text and context for my ſo doing, to which you have anſwered nothing, but by repeating aſſertions of that which is to be proven, and which is plainly croſs to the very text. For though it be manifeſt that the exhortation, 1 Pet. v. 12. 13. applies to as many companies of elders or Preſbyteries as were in theſe parts, and as many flocks as had theſe elders among them, and to all the preſbyteries and the flocks whereof they are overſeers to the end of time; yet though the exhortation be thus far indefinite, as you ſpeak, it is moſt manifeſt, that the exhortation is directed to a company of elders as ſtanding related to the flock which is among them, and whereunto they are enſamples; which flock they are exhorted to feed in the full ſenſe of that word. And there is no flock any way ſpoke of there, but a flock which is among them; nor are they called to overſee any flock there, but the flock which they are to overſee, not as lords, but as enſamples; nor are they exhorted to feed any flock there, but the flock which they could feed in the full ſenſe of feeding, and where they diſpenſed the ordinance of the ſupper, as well as exerciſed diſcipline and government; nor is there the leaſt inſinuation of any flock fed with diſcipline and government diſtinct from the flock which was fed with the word and ſacrament.

How then do you propoſe to make it appear, that all the churches in theſe parts were one church, and all the preſbyteries were one council of elders ruling that one compounded church in matters of general concern? Though you repeat this never ſo oft, till you find ſome foundation for it in this

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or ſome other text, it ſignifies nothing. And till you prove that all theſe flocks or churches are called one flock, though they all had one king, Jeſus Chriſt, and one law that is now written in the New Teſtament, you ſay nothing to your purpoſe. As to what you ſay of my begging the queſtion about the church in Epheſus; after you have deſtroyed the argument taken from the large converſion there, which extended to all the little Aſia, by ſaying the flock or church in Epheſus conſiſted only of theſe in the city, you can do nothing but beg upon the queſtion. Every preſbytery in theſe provinces, yea and every where elſe, is as expreſsly called to feed the flock which is among them, and overſee it as enſamples, as the preſbytery of the church in Epheſus is called to feed that flock; but it is not yet proven, that any ſuch flock conſiſts of many flocks. I alſo denied that the twelve tribes are all deſigned *church*, James v. 14. and gave my reaſons, to which you anſwer nothing, but criticiſe upon my manner of denying, and come off with a bare repetition of your poor aſſertion, and a reflection on me, as uſing mean ſhifts, *i. e.* arguments and exceptions, as I take it, which you will not venture to remove.

Then you lay down a ſcheme about the goſpel-miniſtry, and aſſert, 1. The relation of Teſtament miniſters or elders to Chriſt as his ſtewards and ambaſſadors; but you ſpeak of no relation to the myſtical body whereof he is the head. 2. You aſſert another relation under this, to Chriſt's univerſal viſible body, 1 Cor. xii. and Eph. iv. But we have ſeen the weakneſs of your arguments on theſe texts to prove any ſuch body of Chriſt, or any gift of a miniſtry unto it. And baptiſm neither reſpects a ſingle congregation, nor your viſible catholic body. Excommunication is out of a particular church, and if it be warrantably done, is ratified in heaven; but there is no viſible catholic church yet proven, out of which any perſon can be excommunicated. 3. You aſſert, that under this there ariſeth another ſubſervient to this, and more particular relation, and that is, their relation to particular congregations, by which you ſay, they are denominated the elders of ſuch and ſuch *churches*, and not of others. And then you apply this chimerical ſcheme to the caſe in hand, by repeating your unproved aſſertion, That many churches are called *church*, *flock*, *aſſembly*, and *one lump*. And becauſe the members and elders of one church may be occaſionally received by another, and there act as members

members or elders, you infer I have not anſwered, but trifled about the churches of Galatia.

I am ſtill ready to acknowledge, that it is the duty of the churches of the ſaints to hold that communion together, and to do every thing toward one another that is required of them, or that they have any example for in the New Teſtament, which is all agreeable to their having the ſame King and Lord, and the ſame law and rule of worſhip and government, and the ſame ordinances appointed for each of them unto the edification of the myſtical body of Chriſt, whereof every member of them is a viſible member, and every miniſter a miniſter: but beyond the communion of churches pointed out to me in the New Teſtament, I dare not follow you, nor aſſent to any ſuch communion and oneneſs of churches as has already ſerved to deſtroy their being, and to bring forth and nurſe up the man of ſin; and that is the thing you are contending for, without any ſhadow of ground for it in the New Teſtament. As to your ſaying, that I have trifled, inſtead of anſwering what you ſay on the churches of Galatia, I tell you again, that it is eaſier to ſpeak thus, after your cuſtom, than to be at pains to take my exceptions out of the way. And I am of the mind that I have ſaid more on the churches of Galatia than you durſt undertake to anſwer.

Then you proceed to your next import of the word *church*, which is the paſtors and rulers of the viſible body of Chriſt; and you ſatisfy yourſelf with ſaying, that I have not anſwered what you ſaid on Matth. xviii. and Acts xv. 22. and Acts xviii. 22. and referring the reader to what you have ſaid, giving him liberty to judge for himſelf. So that I have no more to do here but refer him alſo to what I have anſwered, if the bare reading over of theſe texts be not ſufficient to let him ſee, that the word *church*, in them, cannot ſignify the elders, as diſtinguiſhed from the flock. But you put me in mind of another ſcripture that you brought in the proof of this in another part of your book, and that is, Acts xiv. 27. where you ſay, by the *church* we muſt only underſtand the preſbytery of Antioch; becauſe it was only that preſbytery that ſent them forth, and not the church; and it is not eaſy to conceive that they ſhould report the ſucceſs of their embaſſy to any but thoſe by whom they were ſent.

To this I anſwer, That as Paul and Barnabas made the ſame report to many others beſides theſe that ſent them, that they made to the church in Antioch, Acts xv. 3. 12. ſo by the church which they gathered together, and to which they

they rehearſed all that God had done with them, I can underſtand nothing elſe but that church wherein that preſbytery was that laid hands on them, Acts xiii. 1. But by the ſame rule, by which you make the church diſtinguiſhed from the elders, Acts xv. 22. yet to ſignify the elders, you may make the church here to ſignify the preſbytery that was in it: and who would be at pains to confute ſuch aſſertions? And now, Sir, I have mentioned all the ſcriptures that you have called in to the ſupport of one of the grand foundations of Popery, namely, a church repreſentative; but let me ſay, that there needs no more but the mentioning of theſe texts, to ſhew that the notion of a church repreſentative never took its riſe from the uſe of the word *church* in the New Teſtament.

But before you leave this head, you tell me you have two things more to propoſe on Matth. xviii. For I reckon you imagine your main ſtrength lies there. And you begin with declining to ſhew a warrant in the New Teſtament for elders their binding and looſing any otherwiſe but in the preſence, and with the conſent of the flock. And, as is your cuſtom when it comes to the pinch, you complain of me for giving you a negative to prove. But after the evidence I have brought from the ſcripture-account of the nature of the rule and government of Chriſtian elders, or preſidents, leaders, feeders of the flock of God which is among them, not as Lords over God's heritage, but as enſamples to the flock, and after what I have pointed out of the practice of the apoſtles and elders of the apoſtolic churches, and particularly the practice, Acts xv. 22. to which agrees the practice of the primitive churches as far down as the third century, I muſt be allowed to ſay, that the elders of a church are warranted to bind and looſe, in the preſence and with the conſent of the flock which they overſee, and that there is no warrant in the New Teſtament for their doing it otherwiſe. Yea, I may put ſuch confidence in you as to reckon, that if you had but had the leaſt ſhadow of a warrant to produce, you would have produced it, before you had betaken yourſelf to the ſhift of making it a negative, and ſo refuſing to prove it, by a rule of the art of ſcholaſtic diſputing.

The two things that you propoſe, and leave to my cooler thoughts, are, "1. Tell the *church* is meant of a church of "rulers, and conſequently it was them the text ſpeaks of, "as having the power of binding and looſing, without the "leaſt hint of the neceſſity of the conſent of private Chri-"ſtians."

" ſtians." Well, this is the thing in queſtion, and it has been in my thoughts long before now; but neither my cooleſt nor warmeſt thoughts can find any ground for it in the text. How is it proven? By two things again. " 1. If the *church* " here meant be not a church only of rulers, then there may " be a worſhipping aſſembly or organiſed church, conſiſting " of no more but two or three; for the promiſe made ℣ 20. " is unto that number, which plainly ſuppoſes there may be " a church of no more in number." But how does it ſuppoſe that? Are the two or three called the *church*, ℣ 19. 20.? Or is the church, ℣ 17. no more but the eminent two or three pointed at ℣ 19. and 20.? The church, ℣ 17. is a ſociety, whereof the treſpaſſing brother and the offended brother, to whom the Lord's diſcourſe is directed, and the one or two more, are members. And therefore the church, ℣ 17. cannot be merely the two or three ſpoke of, ℣ 19. and 20. The promiſe, ℣ 18. is made unto the church, whereof the offended brother is a member. Again, there is a promiſe particularly made to two or three of them to whom the promiſe was made ℣ 18. and theſe are the elders, or theſe that preſide in the church, or their leaders and enſamples in this matter. Theſe are not called the *church*, but *two of you*, which is the very leaſt number of which a preſbytery of a church can conſiſt; and theſe two have this promiſe as well as twenty.

Now, Sir, ſuppoſe, as our Lord ſuppoſes, there be no more elders to act in this buſineſs but two, then tell me what is intended by *you*, of whom he ſays theſe two are, if it be not the ſociety of which he had been ſpeaking in the foregoing verſes, whereof the offended brother, to whom his diſcourſe is directed from the beginning, is a member? Thus I am of opinion, that you ſhall never be able to prove, that the two or three, whom our Lord makes only a notable part of the church, are called the *church*, Matth. xviii. 17. It is to me manifeſt, that the whole church, the whole ſociety, whereof two or three are an eminent part, has ſome part to act in this matter of binding and looſing: for theſe two or three are plainly two or three of that church to which the offended brother tells the treſpaſs, ℣ 17. and of them that " bind or looſe on earth," with a promiſe of " binding " and looſing in heaven" what they " bind and looſe on the " earth," ℣ 18. The brother that tells the church whereof he is a member the treſpaſs, has plainly a part to act in this matter; and ſo has the whole brotherhood, according to

theſe words, "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be "to thee as an Heathen man and a publican. Verily I ſay "unto you, Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth ſhall be bound "in heaven. Again, I ſay unto you, That if two of you "ſhall agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall "aſk, it ſhall be done for them," *&c.*

Now, as I reckon you will not confine to elders what is ſaid to the offended brother, leſt you make this whole diſcourſe to touch only offences and treſpaſſes among elders; ſo you may ſee that theſe to whom he ſpeaks, together with the offended brother, are more than the two or three of them. Theſe two or three, then, are not the whole ſociety that acts in binding and looſing, or the church; but they are thoſe that preſide among them, that guide and lead them, not as lords, but enſamples in the buſineſs of binding and looſing; and they have a ſpecial promiſe, as they are ſuch a part of the binding and looſing ſociety, or of the church; but they have no promiſe as ſeparated from that ſociety, and acting without them, or agreeing to aſk, touching binding and looſing, and gathering together without them, to that purpoſe.

By what has been ſaid, you may ſee the great weakneſs of your inference; if the *church* be not meant of a church only of rulers, then there may be an organiſed church, conſiſting only of two or three: and you may alſo perceive the falſehood of the allegeance that ſupports it, *viz.* That the promiſe, ℣ 20. being made to that number, ſuppoſes there may be a church of no more but that number. And from what has been ſaid, you have an eaſy anſwer to your ſecond argument, to prove that the church, ℣ 17. means a church only of rulers: for you propoſe a queſtion upon ℣ 19. which you do not cite fairly; and the queſtion is, "Now, is the church "here meant in the preceding verſe, of a congregation of Je"ſus Chriſt with its preſbytery?" And then you tell me, "If I will not reject theſe words, they muſt ſtand as a de"monſtration, that "Tell the church" is meant of a church"repreſentative." But ℣ 19. can never ſhew that the church, ℣ 17. is to be underſtood only to mean the two, who are the ſmalleſt preſbytery that can be in a church. This is not the whole church to which the promiſe was made, ℣ 18. but an eminent part of it, even the preſidents in it: and the promiſe made to theſe two, ℣ 19. is not made to them as acting ſeparately from their brethren, the members of the church, ſo as to bind and looſe without them, but as acting their

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proper part among them, as preſidents in the ſociety where this affair is tranſacted. The promiſe ſuppoſes there are no more but two of that kind in the ſociety of which he had been before ſpeaking: and his words for the encouragement of the ſmalleſt preſbytery or council of biſhops in a church, and therefore alſo of the greateſt, are, "If two of you ſhall "agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, it "ſhall be done for them." Now theſe two, or as many more elders as can be in a church, are not the whole church, but two of the church: ſo that, in anſwer to your queſtion, I can tell you that I find both congregation of Jeſus Chriſt, *you*, and its preſbytery, *two of you*, pointed at ℣ 19. And thus, this verſe can never demonſtrate, that *Tell the church*, ℣ 17. is meant of a church-repreſentative, but the contrary. But indeed you ſay nothing for a church-repreſentative here, till you prove that the two or three are called the *church*, ſeparately from the ſociety where they rule; which, for what I can ſee, can never be done.

From what has been ſaid, you may alſo ſee, how groundleſs your bold aſſertion is, "There is nothing here to give "the leaſt countenance to the conſent or concurrence of a "congregation in binding or looſing." You conclude what you ſay on this head with ſomething like a contradiction to yourſelf: for you had told in your book, p. 607. 608. That to meet in Chriſt's name included their concord and agreement in the thing they are to addreſs him for; and that this is pointed out to us in what he immediately lays down, before he gives this encouraging promiſe to ſuch as aſſemble in his name, ℣ 19. and then you apply all this that is ſaid to two or three to twenty or thirty, p. 610. 611. 612. But now you tell, where there are a multitude of rulers, the agreement of the plurality muſt determine the cauſe, unleſs we ſhould put it in the power of any one to have a negative over a whole aſſembly, which is abſurd, and contrary to common ſenſe.

It is true you ſtill acknowledge, what cannot be denied, that where there are only two, as is ſuppoſed in the text, there cannot be a deciſion but by their agreement or joint act; and you further acknowledge, there cannot be a deciſion by two againſt one, if there be three, as is ſuppoſed in the following verſe. But is it any way more abſurd, and contrary to common ſenſe, that ten ſhould have a negative upon twenty, than one ſhould have a negative over two? Further, if the multitude of rulers meet in Chriſt's name, then it is not con-

trary to your ſenſe, that is, common ſenſe, that they ſhould proceed by concord and agreement; for that is according to your ſenſe to meet and act in Chriſt's name. I am ſure this text warrants and obliges two or three elders in a church to act in binding and looſing in the way of concord and agreement; and, till you find a warrant for their doing otherwiſe when they are more in number, you will not be able to ſay, that they are regulating their actions agreeably to his word, which you own is imported in meeting in his name. But you have not aſſerted that it is contrary to ſcripture, that the greateſt number of elders ſhould always act in binding and looſing by concord, unleſs you intend to ſay, that whatever is contrary to your ſenſe, or differs from the common way of proceeding in deciſions in numerous civil courts of the rulers of the nations of the world, is contrary to the rule of the ſcripture, touching the procedure of elders in the church where they preſide. It will not be ſo eaſy for you to ſhew me the abſurdity of putting that ſame thing, and no more, in the power of any one elder over a whole great company of elders, that is put in the power of every other in that company over him and the reſt, as I think it will be to ſhew the abſurdity of putting it in the power of any one in an aſſembly of thirty elders to bind or looſe over the belly of fourteen of them.

The ſecond thing that you propoſe, and leave to my cooler thoughts, would need ſome explication, before it can come ſo low as I may have a clear thought about the ſenſe of it. As I can take it, you point ſome way to that old controverſy about the donation of the keys; and ſo you ſay that my ſenſe of Matth. xviii. ſtill goes on the ſuppoſition, that this text was an inſtitution and donation of the keys to a church of Jeſus Chriſt and its preſbytery. In oppoſition to this, you tell me, it is owned by moſt, if not all, that the text ſuppoſeth only that the keys were given to particular churches. Excuſe me, Sir, if my capacity do not reach your ſenſe or ſcope here. If the following words explain your meaning, it is not me; for I am incapable to comprehend them. They are as follows: "They were given to the a-"poſtles together, and they, being general officers, ſtanding "in fixed and ſtated relation to no particular churches, the "keys came to the miniſtry in particular churches, as parts "of the whole organiſed body; and yet at the ſame time "immediately, and not as if by commiſſion from the catho-"lic church."

Without breaking my head about this myſterious diſcourſe of

of yours, I ſhall take the trouble to tell you my judgment about the grant of the power of binding and looſing in diſcipline; for of that it is that Matth. xviii. ſpeaks, and that is what I reckon you mean by the keys, as far as this text has a relation to them. It is my judgment, that the power of binding and looſing in diſcipline is not given, nor ſuppoſed in this text to be given, to the apoſtles as ſuch, and as diſtinguiſhed from the elders or biſhops, and the brethren of the churches; and the reaſon of my judgment is, that, if it were ſo, there could be no binding or looſing after the apoſtles are ceaſed. It is alſo my judgment, that the power of binding and looſing is not given here, nor ſuppoſed to be given to the whole organiſed body, the catholic viſible church, whereof all particular viſible churches are parts; and this I ſay, becauſe, as it is evident this is not the church ſpoke of Matth. xviii.; ſo, after what I have before ſaid, I may be allowed to affirm, there is no ſuch church ſo much as ſuppoſed in the New Teſtament. Further, from what is before ſaid, you may ſee it is my judgment, that this text does not ſo much as ſuppoſe that any company of elders has power to bind and looſe, but as preſiding in the church to which the offended brother tells his brother's treſpaſs, after he has neglected to hear the one or two more; neither does the text ſuppoſe, that they have any power to bind and looſe in dependence on any ſuperior court of elders, but only as depending immediately on Jeſus Chriſt, who ratifies in heaven what is done by a church of his brethren and its preſbytery on the earth in his name.

You profeſs dullneſs where an anſwer was expected to my critical argument againſt a catholic viſible church, and a church-repreſentative. And you leave me as much in the dark as before, as to the inference you make from the conſtitution of the Jewiſh church to that of the Chriſtian. Only you ſay ſynagogues were of old time, which is no news to me; for I know they took place ſoon after the return from the Babyloniſh captivity: but this is no contradiction to what I ſaid, far leſs a proof of the contrary. I have ſaid enough before of the ſynagogues and the ſubordination that was in the Jewiſh church, and of the equality and inequality of rulers, and I need not here repeat. You own there was not an equality of rulers of old; and therefore this cannot remain when the reſt is aboliſhed. You ſay your argument is not taken from the identity of the thing, but by way of analogy. But what is the analogy between equality and inequality? You ſtill affirm, that the government of the Jewiſh church was moral as to its eſſence; and

and therefore it is your mind, that the Jewiſh church, as to its eſſence, was moral; but you refuſe to prove it, after your cuſtom, by making it a negative: for to ſay it is moral is to ſay it is not typical, and this is a negative. Now what this moral eſſence of the government of the Jewiſh church is, according to you, I know not, if it be not the Preſbyterian model, which yet you muſt own appeared not in the inſtitution of that church. But it ſeems when every thing elſe in the conſtitution of that church is aboliſhed, the Preſbyterian model, which was hid before as the eſſence, is now apparent as the eſſence of the Jewiſh church ſtript of all its coverings. And if this be moral, then be pleaſed only to ſatisfy me how any other model might as well have been inſtituted by Chriſt, as you yourſelf acknowledge in words that I have before cited?

I have attended upon you with ſome pains in the foregoing part of your Review, and particularly upon my third obſervation, where you labour much in the maintenance of your credit as a critic, and do your beſt in the ſupport of your catholic viſible church, and church-repreſentative, and of the arguments you had uſed for theſe; and, after all, I muſt ſay my obſervations and this obſervation are very much confirmed to me by your Review; and the weakneſs of your cauſe is ſtill more manifeſt as to the intereſt it pretends in the ſcripture, as I hope it will ſtill be further manifeſt as you write further upon it. The following part of your Review depends upon what you have been ſaying in this foregoing part; and, as you are ſhorter, therefore on the following obſervations, ſo, I think, may I be.

On the fourth obſervation, you labour more in the vindication of your own unguarded expreſſions than in the proof, the point in queſtion, or in the taking off of my exceptions, and anſwering my arguments. You ſay you have given a good reaſon towards the end of that ſection that begins, p. 108.; wherefore you could not take the theſis that I laid down in *The explication of the propoſition.* But was not that the book you was pretending all along to impugn? And now, when I had, in the Obſervations, referred you to that Explication, the theſis laid down there, and the arguments that ſupport it, why could you not take that for the theſis to be impugned by you now? And what concern have I with your arguments any further than they touch that? But as far as I could underſtand, from the whole of that ſection in your book, that your notion of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity that fits a man for being a member of a viſible church differs

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from mine, I have impugned it, and brought ſcriptural arguments againſt it; to which I ſee no anſwer, but reproach of my notions of brotherly love, and complaints of flaming ſpeeches, and flights, and ludicrous banters, and methods unbecoming the ſobriety of a Chriſtian, *&c.* But as I ſpoke the "words of truth and ſoberneſs," ſo I ſee they have affected you one of theſe two ways, that the truth uſes to affect the ſons of men. And as you have not ventured upon any other kind of anſwer to my arguments, ſo I hope you will excuſe, if I can make no further return to theſe words of yours. You propoſe one queſtion to me upon the thing in queſtion, and to that I ſhall give you a plain anſwer; and your queſtion is, "Was the church of Corinth particularly, or any other "church, mentioned in the New Teſtament, where there "were ſo many abominable principles and practices abound-"ing, all ſaints and faithful ones, or members of the myſti-"cal body in the judgment of charity?" My anſwer is, beſide what I have ſaid on this ſubject in *The explication of the propoſition*, to which I refer you, That all the members of the church in Corinth, or any other ſuch church, having come to be ſo upon the appearance of their faith, love, and hope in Chriſt Jeſus, behoved to be reckoned ſaints, and faithful in Chriſt, and members of his body myſtical, till ſuch time as the law of Chriſt, touching offenſive principles and practices, warranted and obliged the church to reckon them as Heathen men and publicans, and the church in Corinth could not lawfully keep them in her communion after that; nor was it then lawful for any Chriſtian to hold communion with them in any viſible church: for that law, if he neglect to hear the church, "Let him be unto thee as an Heathen "man and a publican," is obliging upon every ſingle member, as well as upon the whole church.

As to what you had formerly aſſerted about the members of the viſible church as ſuch not having any right from God to partake of the ſeals of the new covenant; after your complaint of my words, which yet were your own, and ſeveral fetches to clear yourſelf, you now advance, "That all the "churches in the New Teſtament have an expreſs law re-"quiring them to partake of the holy ſacrament of the "Lord's ſupper, and binding them at the ſame time to do it "in faith." Thus you have now acknowledged, that the members of every viſible church have a right from God to partake of that ſeal of the new covenant. But you ſpeak of a ſaving title and inward ſeal of the Spirit which can only be had

had by faith; whereas before you ſaid the members of the viſible church, as ſuch, had not any title, and you ſeemed to ſpeak of the ſacraments. As to what you ſay of the covenant, within the bond of which all that came out of Egypt were, you will be in a better caſe to ſpeak with me about it, after you have conſidered and attempted to anſwer my book on the kingdom of Chriſt: for I will not be always repeating what ſtands there unanſwered touching the difference betwixt the covenant at Sinai and the new covenant.

As to a miniſter's preaching as a miniſter to none but the church whereof he is paſtor, you cite the Independents; and when I ſay that the paſtor of a church bears Chriſt's commiſſion to preach the goſpel to every creature, you repeat your ordinary cant about a catholic church viſible, and the identity of that with all creatures under heaven, and propoſe a deal of queſtions to me upon the ſuppoſition of your own ſcheme about a catholic viſible church, as in order of nature before particular churches, which yet ſometimes you make the parts of which that whole is made up. But as I have ſhewed that no ſuch catholic church appears in the New Teſtament, ſo now I give you theſe things for an anſwer to all your queſtions.

1. Every man that has the commiſſion recorded, Matth. xxviii. is the miniſter of Chriſt, the head of the myſtical body, and of that catholic body which is his church, and not of any catholic church viſible. And there is no other catholic church but this ſo much as ſuppoſed to be conſtituted in the miniſterial commiſſion.

2. For the edifying of this catholic body, already formed by the miniſtry of the apoſtles, Chriſt's miniſters, the miniſters of his myſtical body, are ſet in churches as paſtors, elders, or biſhops of theſe churches; and that by his laws ſo appointing. And as paſtors of theſe churches, which are ſubſervient every one of them to the myſtical body, they are to preach the goſpel to them that are without, or the world, to gather them men out of it into the myſtical, and then labour to confirm them in it, by gathering them into a viſible church after they are baptiſed, and teaching them there to obſerve all things whatſoever he has commanded.

3. As the miniſterial commiſſion was granted in the firſt congregational church, as I ſhewed in the Obſervations, and proceeded out of it in its execution, ſo the moſt proper way for the execution of it is by the paſtors of ſuch churches; and every other way is irregular, that is, not according to

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the rule of the word. Apollos acted regularly, when, upon his being qualified to execute that commiſſion in a place where there was no church yet erected, he went forthwith to the church at Corinth in Achaia, and did not ſtay to exerciſe his miniſtry, or fulfil his commiſſion among his diſciples, according to John Baptiſt's miniſtry that were there, Acts xviii. towards the cloſe, and chap. xix. from the beginning.

4. I do not perfectly underſtand what you intend by what you ſay about inveſtiture, if you be not ſome way ſeeking to eſtabliſh the uninterrupted ſucceſſion; as to which I refer you to the author of the *Original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church*, p. 616. & 617. And I am ready to maintain, that it is in the power of the diſciples of Chriſt, at any time, or in any place of the world where they are, to aſſemble together, and chuſe their paſtors, who, if they be qualified by Jeſus Chriſt with ability to teach and exhort, and anſwer the characters laid down in his law, bear his commiſſion as truly as any paſtors in the firſt Chriſtian churches; yea, I will acknowledge, that every man that is qualified by Chriſt, and accepted by his diſciples, hearing his voice, though they be not yet gathered together in a church, bears his commiſſion; and without this, all the inveſtiture in the world will not inveſt any man with that commiſſion. And if you mean by inveſtiture, the impoſition of hands, there is no other preſbytery that can do that but the preſbytery of a congregational church; and they have this power as well as the power of binding and looſing, as they are independent of any ſuperior church power, and depend immediately on Jeſus Chriſt, the head of the catholic body myſtical, who has all power in heaven and earth.

Further, it belongs properly to a congregation or church of the ſaints, as the ſociety wherein the true catholic church is repreſented, and as inſtituted by Chriſt for holding up and ſpreading the light of his goſpel in the world as a golden candleſtick, in a ſubſerviency to the myſtical body, to ſet apart paſtors and teachers for the edifying of that body, and when they are placed in ſuch a church, they are a light ſet on a candleſtick, that it may ſhine to all about. But as they are indeed to be pitied, who pretend to be miniſters, and have no other evidence for it to their own conſciences, or the conſciences of others, but that hands were laid on them by a dioceſan biſhop, or by a claſſical preſbytery, and thereupon, by the cuſtom of the country, they were called miniſters, and enjoyed benefices accordingly; ſo your queſtions about inveſtiture, and the commiſſion to preach, put

me in mind of an ancient queſtion, *Who gave thee this authority?* That has been put by the Roman church to them of the reformation, eſpecially the firſt of them; and when you anſwer me diſtinctly, who made the inveſtiture of Chriſt's commiſſion them? I think you will furniſh anſwers to your own queſtions to me. Whereas I had told you, that by your own argument againſt the Independents, you can preach only as private perſons, to the reſt of the world, that are not members of the catholic church viſible, ſeeing you do not pretend to be paſtors to more than that church. You, 1. Repeat your aſſertion, that miniſters are officers of the catholic viſible church; for which, as I have ſhewed, you have no countenance from 1 Cor. xii. 28. nor from any other ſcripture. But what is this to the purpoſe? you tell me, 2. The ſame commiſſion by which the catholic church viſible is conſtitute, gives miniſters an authoritative power to preach to Heathens, in order to bring them in to the church, that they may receive the ſtated and orderly diſpenſation of ordinances, as well as it makes them the miniſters of that church when gathered.

But where is that commiſſion by which the catholic church viſible is conſtitute? This will be as hard for you to ſhew, as where that church is united in the unity of one eccleſiaſtic government? And does that commiſſion make you a paſtor to Heathens before they be brought in to that church by preaching? If not, do you preach to them as a paſtor or a private perſon? I reckon this is the pith of your mighty argument againſt the Independents. You ſay you have an authoritative power to preach to them. And ſo has every paſtor of a church of the ſaints an authoritative power, as the miniſter of Chriſt, the head of his body the true church, and the head over all things to it, to preach the goſpel to every creature; and this power he has from him that conſtituted the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, and inſtituted every church of the ſaints, to ſhew it forth, and to ſerve to the edification of it till it be perfected; but never inſtituted a catholic viſible organized church, nor appointed any officers for it.

Your proving that Eph. iv. 11. 12. is meant of the inviſible church, is ſtill inconſiſtent, as I ſaid, with your bringing that text as a proof for the miniſtry's being given to the catholic viſible church: for you cannot prove that the catholic viſible is meant there, till you manifeſt that it cannot be underſtood of the inviſible, as you do on other texts you bring

bring to this purpoſe. Neither do you reconcile what you ſay of them that are baptized, having a ſealed right to all the external privileges belonging to the covenant whereof baptiſm is the ſeal, and of this continuing till it be forfeited by ſome deed or action of the perſon, either with what you ſaid, p. 111. of your book, which you have now unſaid, or with what you ſay, p. 118. where you require, in the baptized, as needful to the end of their being admitted members of the viſible church, that they make a ſerious profeſſion of ſubjection to the ordinances of Chriſt.

You forbear to prove a ſuppoſition, which was the foundation upon which an argument of yours leaned, and excuſe yourſelf from proving it, by denying it was your words; but take away that ſuppoſition, and then let your own judgment direct you where the ſtrength of your argument lies. And I took very good care to touch upon the queſtion, how the preaching of the paſtors of churches of the ſaints, for the conviction and converſion even of hypocrites conſiſts with their judgment of charity of every church-member; when I denied the ſuppoſition, and pointed you to your own diſtinction, p. 147. and to Paul's calling them to be reconciled to God, whom he yet declares to be ſaints. And now I further tell you, that the paſtor of ſuch a church may preach the ſame way to his church-members, as you may do to that part of the catholic church which you admit to the Lord's ſupper, ſuppoſing them to be converted already.

I muſt ſay, you have a ſtrange medley of principles about church membership and communion. For you affirm, "that all "the churches in the New Teſtament have an expreſs law re-"quiring them to partake of the Lord's ſupper," as was before noticed. Again you affirm, "I could be very clear to admit a "Heathen to be a member of the viſible church, on his mo-"ral and ſeemingly ſerious profeſſion of the goſpel; though, at "the ſame time, I could not determine myſelf he was to "be eſteemed a member of the myſtical body." Then you affirm, "Thus, as the Lord's ſupper is not a formal mean "of converſion, but of farther growth and nouriſhment to "thoſe that are already converted, ſo theſe who give no diſ-"coveries of their belief in Chriſt, are not to be admitted to "partake of that ordinance, leſt they profane the holy things "of God, and the miniſter be acceſſory thereto: but in the "admiſſion of members to the viſible church, this cannot be "ſaid, this being the neceſſary and ordinarily poſſible mean "of converſion."

I required ſcripture-proof for the ſentence of ſuſpenſion from the Lord's ſupper. In anſwer to this, 1. You deſire me to ſhew you expreſs ſcripture for my aſſerting this propoſition, *viz.* The apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem. Inſtead of ſcripture-proof, you tell me expreſs ſcripture, and for a propoſition aſſerted by me, you produce ſome part of a propoſition, which is no aſſertion. But to ſatisfy you in the way you ſatisfy me ſometimes, the author of the *Original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church* has theſe words, p. 291. "from the preſbyterial church of Jeruſalem, the apoſtles "and preſbyters." And to warrant him in this way of ſpeaking, he brings Acts xv. 6.; and I add to him for a warrant of what you call my aſſertion, which is not in all reſpects the ſame with his, Acts xv. 2. 4. 22. xvi. 2. 3. 4. Give ſuch ſcripture-proof for ſuſpenſion from the Lord's ſupper, and I'll embrace it. 2. You bring me the judgment of Independents in New England; and you ſignify I cannot refuſe their authority, unleſs I reject them as brethren, as well as the Preſbyterian divines; whereby it ſeems to me you think I ſhould reject every man as my brother, from whoſe judgment I differ in any thing. And when you ſet up human authority in this dreſs, it looks very awful; yet it does not fright me, even in this ſhape, when it ſtands in the place of ſcripture proof. You tell me of ſcriptures they cite; but it is not the ſcriptures, but their authority in their judgment upon them, that you would have to weigh with me. As to Matth. xviii. it ſpeaks not of ſuſpenſion, but excommunication; and it informs my judgment againſt ſuſpenſion. Tit. iii. 10. agrees with Matth. xviii. and ſpeaks of no cenſure but admonition and excommunication. Matth. v. 23. 24. Luke xvii. 3. 4. ſpeak not of any church-cenſure, but of private grudges and offences to be privately removed; or if they cannot be that way removed, then Matth. xviii. takes place: And ſo I remain unſatisfied about this ſuſpenſion, by means of which it is, that you hold "flagitious and lewd hearers, "and thoſe who are openly flagitious, and evidence them-"ſelves unbelievers," to be members of the viſible church.

You note down ſome texts to ſupport the diſtinction between theſe ſuſpended members, or the members whom you admit not to the Lord's ſupper, and theſe members whom you admit to that ordinance; but for brevity's ſake you have not told me how they ſupport it. The firſt is Matth. vii. 6. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither caſt ye "your pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under

"their

"their feet, and turn again and rent you." By this it ſeems to me that you hold them members of the viſible church whom you will not admit to the ſupper, becauſe you can call them "dogs and ſwine, that would trample holy things under "their feet, and turn again and rent you." And hereby it appears to me, that you would exclude the ordinance of excommunication, which is very clear in the ſcriptures, and ſet it aſide altogether by this ſuſpenſion: for if you keep in them whom you can call "dogs and ſwine," I ſee not whom you are to caſt out. But is not church-memberſhip a holy thing, and do not you call the members of the viſible church federally holy? How then comes this holy thing, this privilege, to be given to theſe "dogs and ſwine?" And how much more do I injure them, that call them the *world*, in diſtinction from the *church*, and preach the goſpel to them to bring them in to the church, than you, that call them "dogs and "ſwine," and yet members of the church, that they may hear the goſpel? Your next text is, 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. 14. 15. of which I have given an account in my Remarks on the memorial of the ſynod of Angus, where I ſhewed that it can neither be underſtood of ſuſpenſion nor excommunication, and to that I refer you. Your laſt is 1 Cor. xi. 27. to the end. But that text ſpeaks of the evil and danger of unworthy communicating in church-members, that uſually came together to eat the Lord's ſupper; and the remedies againſt this are propoſed to them. "Let a man examine himſelf, "and ſo let him eat. And my brethren, when ye come to-"gether to eat, tarry one for another; and if any man hun-"ger, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto "condemnation." And is there the leaſt ſhadow of ſuſpenſion in all this, or any thing like ſome church-members laid by from the Lord's ſupper while the reſt were partaking? Or, is not this very ſcripture an evidence to the contrary?

On the 5th Obſervation, you have plainly ſhifted the proof of that ſuppoſition, upon which the whole of your ſcheme ſtands; and I hope you now find where you are pinched on this head, and that your argument for a plurality of congregations or churches, in the church that was in Jeruſalem, cannot be made out, without the proof of a plurality of negatives, which you will not undertake to prove; and you complain of my indiſcretion in calling for the probation of them. Where you do not ſay that the thing to be proven is negative, there I have as little proof from you as where you complain of a negative; and you do not give anſwer to

any

any thing of argument againſt your ſuppoſition that is to be found in this Obſervation. Only you inſinuate, that Peter's ſermon, Acts ii. was delivered by him to that multitude in different languages; and this is another prop to your ſuppoſition. You have alſo tried your critical ſkill, for my diverſion, on the word *myriads*, Luke xii. 1. But the beſt of it is, you complain of my ſhifting ſcripture-proof as to what I ſay of churches throughout Judea and Galilee, and rebuke me for diſregard to ſcripture hiſtory; and for my conviction you cite Acts viii. where you ſay the Holy Ghoſt has been expreſs as to this point. But what is the point that he is ſo expreſs upon there? Is he expreſs upon this point, That there were no churches throughout all Judea and Galilee, but that in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion? I have looked through that chapter, becauſe of your confidence, imagining that though I had read that chapter, as well as the whole book of the Acts, with ſome attention before, there might ſtill be ſomething in it to which I had not adverted. But as I ſee not a word of Galilee there, ſo except I ſhould ſay, that becauſe the church in Jeruſalem was ſcattered throughout the regions of Judea, it was impoſſible there could be other churches, beſide that in Jeruſalem, throughout Judea and Galilee, before the diſperſion, I cannot perceive how this propoſition of mine is any way diſagreeable to that part of the ſacred hiſtory. "Though churches be not mentioned "throughout Judea and Galilee till after the diſperſion; yet, "when we come to ſpeak of impoſſibilities, it will be "hard to prove it impoſſible, that there were churches "throughout Judea and Galilee before." And this is the ſample that you ſay you have of my candour among other inſtances. But leſt you beget an impreſſion on mens minds, that where you have leaſt foundation, there you are moſt confident, and bring the heavieſt charges, I humbly adviſe you to uſe leſs confidence, at leaſt till you be better acquaint with the ſcripture-hiſtory; and while you are declining proof as upon this Obſervation, be modeſt, and beware of ſupplying the place of an argument by an impotent attack upon the character of your adverſary: for this I think would tend much to your credit as an author.

After all, ſince you and I are agreed, that the church in Jeruſalem was made up only of the Chriſtians inhabiting that city, or, at moſt, the ſuburbs; and ſince you have not undertaken to deny, that the converſions in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion, extended farther amongſt the Jews that were reſorting

ſorting there, the impoſſibility of the church in Jeruſalem its being one congregation remains ſtill to be made out, as before, from the multiplicity of converts, whether there were churches throughout Judea and Galilee or not before the diſperſion. And you have heſitated, and will for ever heſitate, in making it out from this topic. This being the caſe, I will eaſily compound with you about churches throughout Judea and Galilee. Be you ſilent where the ſcripture-hiſtory is ſilent; let what it ſays not be nothing to you, and I ſhall not ſo much as mention churches throughout Judea and Galilee, beſide that in Jeruſalem before the diſperſion.

On the ſixth Obſervation, you ſay nothing of the catholic church viſible, but ſlightly repeat ſome of your former aſſertions, fully conſidered already. Your anſwer to all my arguments and exceptions is to be ſought out of theſe expreſſions: "I find nothing but poor ſhifts and carpings, with long "ſtories that come not near the point in debate." Again, "And all your popular harangue comes not near the que-"ſtion." "And your ſtrong aſſertions and uncharitable "charges," and the like. This is indeed the ſhorteſt and the eaſieſt way of anſwering. But as I am not certain that it ſatisfies your own conſcience, ſo I ſhall, I hope, never write for the ſake of a reader that counts ſuch things ſatisfying anſwers. You are ſo much touched with what you call my poor ſhifts and carpings, and popular harangues, and ſtrong aſſertions, that you cannot forbear attacking my character, though you ſeem to have been very ſcarce of furniture for it from what I ſaid on this ſubject; as appears from your charge, and the ground of it. Your words are: "You fur-"ther add, in the exceſs of your modeſty, that you know "no viſible union of this body, — except you could make "one viſible paſtor and biſhop, *&c.*" But how does that exceſs of my modeſty appear in this? It appears, by your remark, in theſe words, "That viſible biſhop, you inſinuate, "has all along been againſt general councils, as I could e-"vince in ſeveral inſtances, were it needful; and all we "plead for is none of his favourite principles." You treat your reader pretty oddly here, when you found this your remark on the cutting off of a conſiderable part of that ſentence by an *&c.* on which you make this remark: for where you have the *&c.* my words are, "Or unanimous college of "biſhops over all the paſtors and congregations in the world, "and one viſible place of worſhip for the whole body to re-"ſort unto."

Now,

Now, Sir, if I had made ſuch a concealment, and built upon it as you do here, what would not have been ſaid upon it by you, that make ſuch a noiſe and a clamour, merely upon my not noting down the pages where the words or opinions are found that I remark upon? Certainly, Sir, you that ſhow ſuch an uncommon zeal for candour, in laying an adverſary's mind and words before the world, and rebuke me ſo ſharply for the leaſt ſhadow of the contrary appearing to yourſelf, and I believe to no other, ſhould ſhow me a good example, as to this piece of reformation in the practice of writers, leſt you bring that to my mind, "But do not ac-"cording to their works."

On Matth. xviii. you incline to make ſhort work. You have nothing but what has been conſidered before, except a complaint of concealing pages, to make up the want of ſomething better to ſay, and references to the Independents. And you take off my exceptions, and anſwer all my arguings on Matth. xviii. by ſuch anſwers as this. "Thus my rea-"ſoning is owned to be good, even by the Independents, as "to the ſubordination of courts; and I find nothing you "have advanced againſt it, ſave in aſſertions, without any "ſuitable proof. As for your impertinent queſtions and "wranglings inſtead of anſwers, from p. 78. to p. 83. as "they do not touch the ſtrength of my argument, ſo they "are ſigns of a deſperate cauſe: And the very foundation of "your cavils and quibbles on Matth. xviii. hath been more "than once ſpoken to in this miſſive."

And this ſhort way of anſwering, as it admits of no reply, ſo it is very agreeable to what you ſay of your hope, never to engage with ſuch an one as you repreſent me to be, if you were once at the end of this miſſive, which it ſeems you are in haſte to be at the end of. You touch a little at what I ſaid about women their expreſſing their conſent or diſſent in deeds of diſcipline. I had left you to choice in this matter, according to your ſenſe of 1 Cor. xiv. And now I find, becauſe they cannot act theſe parts in the diſcipline that are a degree of teaching, you are of the mind, that the teachers may proceed without their conſent any way ſignified, to bind and looſe, and that they ought not to expreſs their conſent or diſſent. Then, inſtead of anſwering what I ſaid to you, cutting off a great part of it by an *&c.* you anſwer ſome woman's tale, as it is reported by your worthy friend Edwards; and then you tell me, you are wearied with ſuch trifling and ſtories inſtead of anſwers. But theſe are only reflections on

my

my arguments and manner of writing. My impertinent queſtions, *&c.* trouble you ſo on this part of the Obſervation, that it could not paſs without another reflection on myſelf. I was before a man with many very ſilly and very ill things about me; but now it is a queſtion if I be a rational creature capable of religion; and I am metamorphoſed into ſomething very like a brute; for I am "one that has caſt off "reaſon as a mean of judging of things ſacred." And with that one you are never to engage after you have got to the end of your miſſive. But, for this good reaſon, you might have ſaved yourſelf the trouble of this miſſive; while yet, on the other hand, it muſt be owned, that when I have caſt off my own reaſon, I am ſtill the fitter to be ſerved with your's in the place of it. And if you be to write againſt none but ſuch adverſaries as will not reject your reaſonings and inferences from ſcripture, that to you are good ſound reaſon, but admit them all peaceably; then I think it will be ſuperfluous for you to write more, though it ſhould be never ſo eaſy.

On Acts xv. I expected at leaſt you would make ſome exceptions to my plain ſcripture-arguments, ſerving to overthrow the two great ſuppoſitions on which all your inferences were built, and to eſtabliſh the congregational order, as clearly founded in that chapter. Inſtead of this, you tell me, "You find a long diſcourſe made up of *ifs* and *buts*; "and then, after you have told things in that comical dreſs, "you deſire me to draw my concluſion from what you have "ſaid." And then you complain of this as a way unſuitable to a diſputant. But you ſay I have not attempted to give any anſwer to your arguments, more than by antiſcriptural aſſertions. And you offer to make this appear from an aſſertion of mine, that you affirm is not clearly founded in ſcripture; and the aſſertion is this, as you repeat it, "That it is "very clear that Paul and Barnabas were not members of "the ſynod at Jeruſalem, from Acts xv. 22." But my aſſertion ſtood in theſe words. "Now, that Paul and Barna-"bas were not members of the court that came together to "decide this queſtion, and that they were not of that com-"pany that ordained the decrees, is to me very clear from "theſe words, ℣ 22. 'Then it pleaſed the apoſtles and el-'ders, with the whole church, to ſend choſen men of their 'own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, Judas, 'ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, 'and wrote letters by them."

After you have ſet down this aſſertion, and the ground of it, in your own way, you addreſs me thus: "But where does "this clearneſs appear? Is it becauſe Paul and Barnabas are "mentioned as the perſons with whom Judas and Silas were "to go down to Antioch? This is all I can find." But would you indeed have me to believe, that this is all you can find, or that this is indeed the thing you find, Obſ. p. 86. 87. 88. to make the aſſertion clear? As I am clear, this that you ſay was not to be found, but another thing; ſo, if you had ſet down my aſſertion in my own words, with the words of the text from which I ſaid I was clear to deny, that Paul and Barnabas were of that company that ordained the decrees, your reader would eaſily have perceived what was the ground of my clearneſs. But you did not, it ſeems, think this ſo fit. And when you are ſhewing the inſufficiency of the ground you would have me to go upon, and coming over the text, why do you ſhun ſo much as mention theſe words of the text, "Of their own company with?" Well, Sir, this was indeed the eaſieſt way, to put another argument in place of mine, and other words in place of the words of the Holy Ghoſt, or conceal his words and my argument, and then ſeek the credit of an anſwerer from ſuch a reader as would be impoſed on, by anſwering to another thing that needed no anſwer; but the eaſieſt way is not always the ſafeſt and ſureſt, nor will it always be found the way to true honour.

To eaſe yourſelf of the diſtreſs that this, which you call my aſſertion, puts you in, you ſay, "You are perſuaded I "am among the firſt that ever held this aſſertion." It ſeems then this is one of my diſtinguiſhing ſingularities, which you are bound to confute, as not being confuted in the book to which you refer in your poſtſcript. But it ſeems, by what you ſay, that I am not altogether the firſt; and, if I have Luke before me, it is enough. Then you tell your reader very confidently, hoping, no doubt, he will be ſo good as to believe you, let Acts xv. inſinuate or ſay what it will to the contrary, "But we have nothing but your word for it, which you "force us to believe is not canonical." Far be it that my word ſhould be canonical; but I am clear we have the word of the author of the book of the Acts for it, and I believe his word is canonical. And it looks like as if you would have your word to be canonical with all them from whom you would hide his word, and to whom you give your own in the place of it.

Next, you think you have found me in a contradiction to myſelf,

myſelf, a real one; whereas your inconſiſtencies are only imaginary. And no doubt you reckon, that many imaginary inconſiſtencies will be abundantly counterbalanced by a real one. I did not apprehend that the queſtion betwixt you and me was, which of us is infallible? or, which of our words be canonical? for I thought we were both liable to real inconſiſtencies. But if this be the very queſtion, I ſhall freely yield my ſide of it, and ſo you may chuſe you ſome other rival than one that has no pretenſions to what you are contending about. But if I had no evidence againſt your infallibility, and your words being canonical, ſave what you ſay about this inconſiſtency, I would be certain that you are fallible, and that your word is not canonical. You ſay, "Now, I deſire you may diſcover to your admirers, which "of theſe aſſertions are trueſt, *viz.* the decrees were ordained by the apoſtles, *&c.* before the queſtion and diſpute "was raiſed at Antioch; or, whether it behoved the news "of that diſpute to be notified to the apoſtles and elders, *&c.* "by Paul and Barnabas, and the commiſſioners from Antioch, before any decrees about it could be enacted? Sir, "you have a dexterity in raiſing imaginary inconſiſtencies, "and I expect you will ſhew an equal ſkill in reconciling a "real one." But may I not inquire at my hater, if he be indeed perſuaded that the firſt of theſe aſſertions is mine? Or if this be what I am aſſerting in the words you yourſelf had cited immediately before your queſtion? "In your ſpeech "before the commiſſion," p. 9. "you ſay, Theſe decrees "were ordained by the apoſtles and theſe elders, with the "brethren that were in Jeruſalem, before the queſtion and "diſpute was raiſed at Antioch, even that company that ſays, "℣ 23. 24."

Whatever be amiſſing in the pointing; yet it is moſt evident, that, in theſe words, I am aſſerting the quite contrary of what you call my aſſertion, and giving the reaſon of it. And my aſſertion is the very ſame with this. The apoſtles and theſe elders, with the brethren, by whom the decrees were ordained, were in Jeruſalem before the queſtion and diſpute was raiſed at Antioch. This was my aſſertion, and the ground of it is pointed out in the words immediately following the aſſertion, "Even that company that ſays," ℣ 23. 24. "Foraſmuch as we have heard, that certain which "went out from us have troubled you with words.—to whom "we gave no ſuch commandment." This is what they ſay, and it ſupports my aſſertion. But you, by concealing what

they ſay, and taking away the main thing in my propoſition by an *&c.* would have me to be aſſerting, that the queſtion and diſpute iſſued in the decrees before it was raiſed. And this was eaſier than to anſwer that argument in my ſpeech, proving, that the decrees were not ordained by elders gathered into a ſynod for that purpoſe out of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, or any other elders, but by the apoſtles reſiding in Jeruſalem, and the elders of the church there, with the brethren of that church. And ſo I think I may give you back Auguſtine's ſaying, "Reſtore me my words, and your "dreaming imaginations," not only of an inconſiſteney in my aſſertions, but alſo of a ſynod in Acts xv. "will vaniſh."

You come next to my ſpeech before the commiſſion to conſider it. And you firſt oppoſe yourſelf to that aſſertion, That the decrees about the keeping of Moſes's law were ordained by the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem. I ſaid ſeveral things, and adduced ſeveral ſcriptures to vouch this aſſertion, and that was one of them of which I have been preſently ſpeaking: but as it would not anſwer your purpoſe to touch it, and give it an anſwer in its proper place; ſo indeed you have not anſwered, nor touched any thing I ſay, or any ſcripture I bring to prove it in the ſpeech, but Acts xvi. 4. which I had connected with Acts xv. 22.; and you ſay that text is no proof of it, but declares the contrary in expreſs words. "For," ſay you, "inſtead of ſaying the apoſtles and "elders of the church in Jeruſalem, it ſays, The apoſtles "and elders which were at Jeruſalem." Here is our famous criticiſm upon *at* and *of*, upon which you form a ſyllogiſm, whereby you diſprove my aſſertion; and this, with a reference to the Independents and their authority, is all the anſwer I have to that part of my ſpeech. Only you ſay, "I deſire "you may let me ſee any ſcripture in the New Teſtament that "will vouch this aſſertion, either expreſsly or by lawful con-"ſequence."

Becauſe I know by this time you will reckon no conſequence lawful that tends toward the congregational way, I ſhall only lay before you the texts themſelves, from which I think I have this aſſertion; and let it not offend you, that I leave them with your conſcience to draw what concluſion from them you can beſt anſwer for, but not to men. Acts xv. 2. "They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and cer-"tain other of them, ſhould go up to Jeruſalem to the apo-"ſtles and elders about this queſtion." ℣ 4. "And when "they were come to Jeruſalem, they were received of the "church,

"church, and of the apoſtles and elders." ℣ 6. "And the "apoſtles and elders came together for to conſider of this mat-"ter." ℣ 22. "Then pleaſed it the apoſtles and elders, "with the whole church, to ſend choſen men of their own "company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas; namely, "Judas ſirnamed Barſabas, and Silas, chief men among the "brethren." ℣ 23. "And wrote letters by them after this "manner, The apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, ſend "greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in "Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia." ℣ 24. "Foraſmuch "as we have heard, that certain which went out from us "have troubled you with words;——to whom we gave no "ſuch commandment." Acts xvi. 1. 2. 3. 4. "Then came "he to Derbe and Lyſtra, and behold, a certain diſciple was "there named Timotheus:——which was well reported of "by the brethren that were at Lyſtra and Iconium.——Him "would Paul have to go forth with him.——And as they "went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees "for to keep, that were ordained of the apoſtles and elders "that were at Jeruſalem." Acts xxi. 18. 20. 25. "And the "day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all "the elders were preſent.——And"——they——"ſaid unto "him.——As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have "written and concluded," &c. Conſider this impartially, and in the fear of the author, together with what I have told you touching your criticiſm on the word *brethren*, and ſee if there be ground for the confidence you expreſs in your demand.

But againſt all this, and all I ſay in the juſtification of this aſſertion in my ſpeech, your criticiſm upon *at* and *of*, abundantly expoſed already, furniſhes you with this ſyllogiſm; which, no doubt, is, according to you, a demonſtration. "The decrees were ordained" by the company "of the "apoſtles and elders which were at Jeruſalem," Acts xvi. 4. "But Paul and Barnabas were apoſtles, and at Jeruſalem "when the decrees were enacted: therefore Paul and Bar-"nabas were of the company who enacted the decrees." It does not become me to meddle with the form of this ſolemn ſyllogiſm, when, perhaps, it has gone to St Andrew's, and got an *imprimatur* from ſome body that has better ſkill in the affair of ſyllogiſms than I can pretend to; though I am far from thinking, that it obtained it by the plurality of the voices of the maſters of philoſophy there. But I may venture to try if I can form one after the model of it, and ſo give

you

you another of the ſame. And here it is: The decrees were ordained by the company of the apoſtles and elders at Jeruſalem, to which Paul and Barnabas were ſent up, and from which they are diſtinguiſhed in the enacting of the decrees, Acts xv. 2. 22. Acts xvi. 4.; but Paul and Barnabas were both in ſome ſenſe apoſtles, and at Jeruſalem when that company enacted the decrees; *ergo*, Paul and Barnabas were of the company which enacted the decrees.

Then, after you have aſſerted, upon what grounds you know beſt, that the words of ℣ 22. diſcover, that Paul and Barnabas gave their ſuffrage, and that ℣ 12. clearly intimates they gave their judgment; while yet it intimates nothing but that they narrated matters of fact relating to the queſtion they came to propoſe to the apoſtles and elders, you proceed to take ſome notice of that part of my ſpeech to which I referred you, that you might ſee that no conſequence can be drawn from Acts xv. for the juriſdiction of one church over another; and ſo you touch at the reaſons condeſcended on in that ſpeech, why the queſtion was ſent to the church in Jeruſalem, and determined there.

The firſt of theſe is, "The falſe teachers uſed the authority of the apoſtles and elders of this church from whence they came out againſt Paul and Barnabas, ℣ 1. 2. 24. 25. 26.; and it was the uſe of ſuch teachers after this to call the apoſtleſhip of Paul in queſtion, and repreſent him unto the churches where they came as differing from the apoſtles." Here are two things to be conſidered as the reaſons of ſending the queſtion to the apoſtles and elders which were in Jeruſalem.

1. That it was a part of the queſtion, Whether Paul and Barnabas, in the exerciſe of their miniſtry among the Gentiles, and in their oppoſition to the teachers that came from the apoſtles and elders to Antioch, were acting contrary to the apoſtles and elders which were in Jeruſalem, and oppoſing them: and this could not be determined but by theſe apoſtles and elders. This is manifeſt from the epiſtle of theſe apoſtles and elders, wherein they declare that theſe teachers had no inſtruction from them to teach what they taught, and condemn their doctrine, and teſtify their love and regard to Paul and Barnabas and their miniſtry; and, leſt Paul and Barnabas ſhould be ſuſpected at Antioch of making a falſe report in their own favour, they write, and ſend Judas and Silas along with them to teſtify the ſame things that they wrote. You do not meddle with this.

But

But there is a ſecond thing to be conſidered here, and that is, that theſe teachers came out from the apoſtles and the elders of the church in Jeruſalem, and being received by the church in Antioch as coming from them, troubled them with the doctrine that they pretended to bring from them. This is likewiſe manifeſt in the epiſtle, where it is given as one of the reaſons why the apoſtles and elders, to whom Paul and Barnabas were ſent up to Jeruſalem, and who received them when they came to Jeruſalem, came together, and decided the queſtion; for they ſay, "Foraſmuchas we have heard, "that certain which went out from us have troubled you "with words.——It ſeemed good unto us, being aſſembled "with one accord."

Againſt this you offer ſomething: for you ſay, "But does "the text ſay, that theſe falſe teachers came to Antioch "from the church of Jeruſalem? Nay, does it not expreſsly "declare they came down from Judea, ℣ 1.?" Then, becauſe you would have us think, that theſe two could not conſiſt together, by the ſame rule by which you would ſay, if a man came from Holland, he came not from Amſterdam; or if a man came down from England, he came not from London, but from every town of England: You tell me, "Now, "according to your own argument, *the certain which went* "*out from us*, ℣ 23. 24. muſt imply, that the elders of the "church of Judea were there, ſeeing theſe falſe teachers "that came from thence, are ſaid to *come out from us*. If "they came from Judea, then the perſons from whom they "came, there mentioned, muſt be the elders of theſe "churches, no leſs than that of Jeruſalem, which was but "one of them." Here you put me mind of their way of arguing upon Ignatius's epiſtles, who would have all Syria to be his dioceſe, or all the churches in Syria, that one church whereof he was paſtor; and the ſame anſwer you can make to them, will ſerve yourſelf.

But, 1. Does it appear to you that the church in Antioch in Syria knew that the elders of all the churches in Judea were in Jeruſalem, when they thought of ſending Paul and Barnabas to Jeruſalem to the elders? Or were the elders of all the churches of Judea in Jeruſalem ready to receive Paul and Barnabas when they came there, and not they only, but that church of Judea, whereof they were elders, as you ſpeak, Acts xv. 4.?

2. How do you make out this inference, if they came from Judea, then the perſons from whom they came, there mentioned,

mentioned, muſt be the elders of theſe churches, no leſs than that of Jeruſalem, which was but one of them? Could they not come from Judea to Antioch, without coming out of every church in Judea, or did they not come from Judea to Antioch in coming from one church in Judea, and from the elders of that one of the churches in Judea?

3. But what authority had the elders of all the churches in Judea, or of the church of Judea, as you call it, over the churches in Syria and Cilicia, and over all the churches of the Gentiles? What authority has the church of Holland and its elders over the church of Scotland, according to your own principles? Or how could the church of Syria ſend up a queſtion to be decided by the elders of the church of Judea? Thus, when your ſynod is turned to the elders of the church of Judea, it brings you in to the dependency of churches upon one another.

You ſay further, "And what is more, there is not the "leaſt innuendo, ver. 4. that the elders ſpoke of, were only "theſe of Jeruſalem, any more than that the apoſtles were "only the apoſtles of that church, which is abſurd." But there is the greateſt innuendo, ℣ 2. & 4. that theſe apoſtles were reſiding in Jeruſalem in the church there; ℣ 33. and that, as you own elders are related to the particular church whereof they are overſeers, ſo theſe elders were the elders of that ſame church that received Paul and Barnabas, when they were come to Jeruſalem. ℣ 2. "They determined that "Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, ſhould go "up to Jeruſalem unto the apoſtles and elders about this que-"ſtion." ℣ 4. "And when they were come to Jeruſalem, "they were received of the church and of the apoſtles and "elders." Thus, as the apoſtles that ordained the decrees are diſtinguiſhed from Paul an Apoſtle, by their reſidence in Jeruſalem, ſo the elders are diſtinguiſhed from all other elders by their being in that church which received Paul and Barnabas when they came to Jeruſalem, that is, the church in Jeruſalem. Next, you tell me, "Nor is there the leaſt "inſinuation, that the church mentioned in that verſe, came "together with the apoſtles and elders, but the contra-"ry, ℣ 6." But does ℣ 6. inſinuate, that theſe elders came together, without the church whereof they were preſidents, to determine that queſtion? or can it inſinuate a contradiction to ℣ 22. 23. and 12.; from which it is evident, that, as ℣ 6. ſays they came together, ſo they came together in the church. And ſo much for the firſt reaſon, and what you have ſaid upon it: for you have not pretended to ſhow, that,

notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding this reaſon, an inference may be drawn from what I ſay on Acts xv. for the juriſdiction of one church over another.

The ſecond reaſon in my ſpeech for the ſending up of this queſtion to the church in Jeruſalem, and the deciding of it there, was, "the word of God came out (1 Cor. xiv. 36.) "from this church to Antioch, and to all the world, and "from hence they had their church-order, and all the ordi- "nances of Chriſt, Acts xi. For this was peculiar to Jeru- "ſalem, that there the goſpel ſhould have a beginning." You cite the page here; but you eaſe your reader of the trouble of looking to it, by ſeeming to ſet down the words, and take care to conceal a conſiderable part of them, and ſo ſpeak againſt what you are pleaſed to ſet down. So you ſay, "But, 1. Was it the worſhipping aſſembly of Jeruſalem, "paſtors and people, that planted the church at Antioch? "This wants proof." All that I was here affirming wants no proof, as long as Acts xi. remains; namely that the word of God came out from the church in Jeruſalem to Antioch, and that from hence they had their church-order, and all the ordinances of Chriſt. Neither ſhall it want proof, that the church in Jeruſalem, the firſt church, where our Lord left his apoſtles when he aſcended, had this pre-eminence above all other churches unto which the word came, that the word of God came firſt out from it; and that other churches had their order, and the ordinances of Chriſt from that church, as long as the prophecies, explained by our Lord to that purpoſe, and his commandment to his apoſtles before he left the earth, and the book of the Acts, remain.

It was propheſied, Iſ. ii. 1.—4. and Micah iv. 1. 2. 3. "And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, that the moun- "tain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of "the mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the hills, and all "nations ſhall flow unto it. And many people ſhall go and "ſay, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the "Lord, to the houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach "us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out "of Zion ſhall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord "from Jeruſalem. And he ſhall judge among the nations, "and ſhall rebuke many people, and they ſhall beat their "ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning- "hooks: nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, nei- "ther ſhall they learn war any more." From this propheſy it appears, that from Jeruſalem the word of the Lord and

his law concerning the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles in one body, which is ſpoke of Eph. ii. ſhould go forth among the nations, and that this peace ſhould be the fruit of its going forth from thence, and of their receiving it from thence. Here was a queſtion raiſed at Antioch, by them that pretended to bring the law of the Lord from Jeruſalem to the Gentiles, and this queſtion touched this peace very near. And where ſhould they go for the deciſion of it, but to Jeruſalem, from whence it behoved that law to proceed? And when the law on that point, or that part of the law of the Lord came from thence, was not this peace the effect of it? That it behoved the word and law of the Lord to go forth from Jeruſalem is evident from our Lord's explication of this prophecy, and ſuch like prophecies in the aſſembly of his apoſtles, and them that were with them, *i. e.* the hundred and twenty, the firſt church, Luke xxiv. 33. 36. 46. 47. "That repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached "in his name among all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem," 48. 49. "But tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem until ye be "endued with power from on high."

Hereby it is evident, that the doctrine of repentance and remiſſion of ſins in the name of Chriſt, was, according to his explication of the prophecies, and his appointment, to have its beginning at Jeruſalem, and to proceed out of that ſociety wherewith the Lord himſelf aſſembled, and from which he was taken up, even the apoſtles and them that were with them, Luke xxiv. or the hundred and twenty, Acts i. even that ſociety on which the Holy Ghoſt was firſt poured down, Acts ii. and to which Peter ſpeaks, Acts xv. 7. 8. 9. compare Acts ii. Acts xi. 15. Now here was a queſtion raiſed by the teachers that came down from Jeruſalem, concerning repentance and remiſſion of ſins, ordained to be preached among all nations in the name of Chriſt: for theſe teachers pretended to bring this from Jeruſalem, as a neceſſary part of the doctrine of the repentance, that the Gentiles ſhould turn to Moſes's law, and that there was no remiſſion of ſins for them in the name of Jeſus without that. And when the believing Gentiles were troubled with this queſtion, Whether this was a part of the doctrine of repentance and remiſſion of ſins to be preached to the Gentiles in Chriſt's name, beginning at Jeruſalem? where were they to ſeek the deciſion of it but there, where it was the Lord's will, that the doctrine of repentance and remiſſion of ſins in his name ſhould begin, and from thence go forth unto all nations? And what ſociety ſhould determine

termine this queſtion, but that ſociety wherein he gave orders about it, and from which he would have that doctrine to proceed, and go forth to the nations?

That this was peculiar to the church in Jeruſalem is manifeſt, in that there is no other church from which our Lord appointed the law, in the firſt revelation of it, to come out unto all the world; ſo that unto every other church but that in Jeruſalem, the ſame queſtion may be put that the Apoſtle puts to the church in Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. 36. What? came the word of God out from you? But the church that was in Jeruſalem had not this pre-eminence, after the law of the Lord to the Gentiles had gone fully forth from it, and after the apoſtles, by whom the Lord appointed the revelation of his law to be made, had left that church; which ſeems to have been the caſe when the epiſtle to the Hebrews was written, wherein the revelation of the Lord's will to the Jews, with reſpect to the law of Moſes, calling them wholly off from it, is moſt clear and full. Now it will be every way as difficult for you to draw an inference, ſhewing the dependence of one church upon another, from the ſubjection of the firſt Chriſtians in all nations, unto the church in Jeruſalem at that time, in that which was peculiar to that church; as, you will own, it is not eaſy to infer the ſubjection of elders to ſuperior officers, after the New-Teſtament revelation is completed, from the ſubjection of the elders of the firſt churches to the apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts. But you tell me, 2. "What is the inference from "thence? Does it thence follow, that Antioch was not a "free church, but ſubject to the determinations of the el- "ders and people in Jeruſalem? If the church of Antioch "and its preſbytery was ſubject to no juriſdiction under hea- "ven in its diſcipline, then, contrary to your own principle, "one Independent was ſubject to another."

You may ſee, by what I have been ſaying in the explication of this part of my ſpeech, that the conſequence of it is, that no inference can be drawn from the ſending of this queſtion to the church in Jeruſalem at that time, and its being decided there, to ſhew the juriſdiction of one church over another; and it was your buſineſs to ſhew, that, notwithſtanding what was ſaid in my ſpeech, the inference, ſhewing the ſubjection of one church to another, was good. But how you come to ſpeak of juriſdiction in diſcipline here, I cannot underſtand: for you cannot ſay, that there was any diſcipline exerciſed upon the church in Antioch or its members, by them that ſent the epiſtle to Antioch, unleſs you alſo affirm, that in all

the epiſtles that the apoſtles wrote to the churches, they, and theſe that were with them, in writing theſe epiſtles, were exerciſing diſcipline upon them. No doubt, the Chriſtian law is the rule of diſcipline: and there is that ſame juriſdiction, in the epiſtle that was ſent to Antioch from Jeruſalem, as there is in all the other parts of the New-Teſtament revelation, or in the Chriſtian law, whereof this is a very conſiderable part. But how you come to imagine, that the elders and people of the church in Jeruſalem could make this part of the New-Teſtament revelation, or at firſt give forth this part of the law of Chriſt to the Gentiles, without the apoſtles, I cannot underſtand.

3. I ſaid in my ſpeech, "The apoſtles were in this church, "and with the elders of this church; where they began their "miniſtry, and ſettled all matters of importance: and this "was an important point to be fixed in this church, while "they were in it: therefore we ſee the church at Antioch "had a ſpecial eye to the apoſtles their being in the preſbytery of Jeruſalem, when they ſent up this queſtion to be "determined there, ℣ 2."

Againſt this you ſay, 1. "It muſt be proven, that the "apoſtles in this matter acted by an extraordinary and immediate influence, as in the penning of the ſcripture. The "contrary of this I made appear; but it is overlooked by "you."

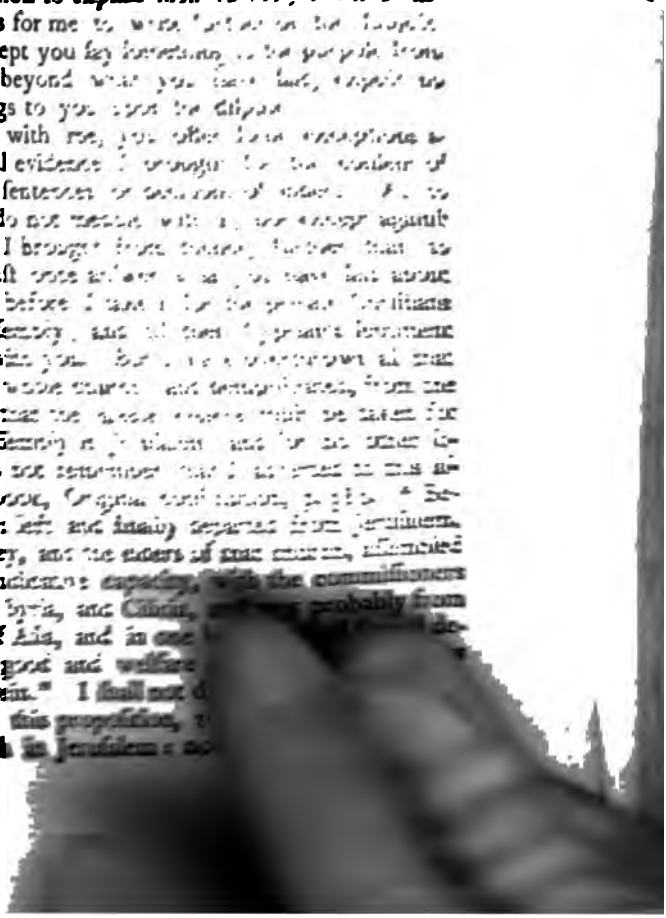
But, 1. The contrary will never appear from the diſcourſes of Peter and James, upon this queſtion in the church in Jeruſalem, in which diſcourſes they infer one truth from another, and explain Old-Teſtament propheſies in like manner as is done in all the New-Teſtament epiſtles to the churches, unleſs you will make it good that theſe epiſtles were not written under an infallible influence. Nor will it appear from the apoſtles their agreeing in the writing of this epiſtle, unleſs you prove, that when a ſingle apoſtle wrote an epiſtle, he was under an extraordinary and immediate influence, but when a company of them agreed, then they were only under an ordinary influence. Nor will it appear, from their taking the concurrence of that church, and its preſidents, where they at firſt received their commiſſion, and from whence it behoved the law of Chriſt, and this remarkable part of it, to go forth to the Gentiles. And you may as well ſay, that when the epiſtle to the Galatians is written in the name of all the brethren that were with Paul, in the writing of it he was not under an extraordinary and immediate influence, as an apoſtle, in that epiſtle. I muſt ſay, that after all I have

heard

heard brought to ſhew, that the apoſtles were not here under an extraordinary and immediate influence, it appears to me, from the whole, that this very remarkable part of the New-Teſtament revelation, and about which the firſt Chriſtians had the greateſt difficulty, was given forth by the inſpired apoſtles with the greateſt ſolemnity, from that church from which the law of Chriſt was to go forth to the Gentiles.

2. As the apoſtles are diſtinguiſhed from the elders or preſidents of the church in Jeruſalem, in the commiſſion from Antioch, and likewiſe expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from them in the deciſion of the queſtion, and in the epiſtle; let me inquire, if the apoſtles did not act in that matter in the capacity of apoſtles, as diſtinguiſhed from elders, even as the elders acted in the capacity of elders, as diſtinguiſhed from apoſtles and brethren? And if they did ſo, then did not the apoſtles act under an extraordinary and immediate influence? Thus when I read of the apoſtles, and elders, and brethren, acting in this matter, I muſt underſtand, that every one of theſe did the part that was proper to them. The apoſtles brought forth, and infallibly declared the mind and will of the Lord Chriſt on this ſubject, in an agreeableneſs to the former parts of the New-Teſtament revelation, already made by them, and in an agreeableneſs to the propheſies of the Old Teſtament, which they infallibly explained, under the immediate influence of the ſame Spirit that indited them, and in oppoſition to the Judaiſers. The preſidents of the church in Jeruſalem went before the brethren, as enſamples of ſubjection unto the revelation of the mind and will of the Lord by the apoſtles, and were their leaders in this matter: And the brethren obeyed and ſubmitted themſelves to their preſidents and guides, who agreed in judging according to the mind and will of Chriſt brought forth by the apoſtles; and this they did in conſenting to the judgment of the elders, according to the revelation made by the apoſtles. Thus when the whole company was made of one accord, every member acting his proper part, the deed was done, and the epiſtle was written, in name of the whole.

3. And would you have me to believe, that we Gentiles have no more, in that ſolemn paſſage touching the yoke of Moſes's law, for our liberty from that yoke, but the canon of an ordinary council, ſuch as may be held to the end of the world? By no means; while it is ſo manifeſt, this thing ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, in his coming at firſt upon the uncircumciſed Gentiles, as the higheſt evidence they could



[illegible] before you proceed further [illegible],
[illegible] your big words, you appear [illegible]
[illegible] down his arms, and begging [illegible]
[illegible] You will not lose your [illegible]
[illegible] to you; but there is [illegible]
[illegible] your cause. You warn [illegible]
[illegible] everlasting danger in [illegible]
[illegible] comfort in all [illegible]
[illegible] that is any way in your [illegible]
[illegible] has attended disputers [illegible]
[illegible] adversaries would [illegible]
[illegible] this danger I am bound [illegible]
[illegible] I can declare this for your [illegible]
[illegible] of more weight than [illegible]
[illegible] other writings against [illegible]
[illegible], and something new [illegible]
[illegible] give occasion to explain [illegible]
[illegible] superfluous for me [illegible]
[illegible]erefore, except you say [illegible]
[illegible]rd of God, beyond [illegible]
[illegible]f my writings to you [illegible]
[illegible]re you part with [illegible]
the scriptural evidence [illegible]
[illegible]ople to the sentences [illegible]
[illegible]v. 22. you do [illegible]
[illegible]ar evidence I brought [illegible]
[illegible], that I must [illegible]
[illegible]ole church, before [illegible]
[illegible]rshipping assembly [illegible]
[illegible]no weight [illegible]
[illegible]id about the [illegible]
[illegible]nd context, [illegible]
[illegible]orshipping assembly [illegible]
Only I [illegible]
[illegible] in your [illegible]
[illegible]e the apostles left and finally departed from Jerusalem.
[illegible] find that they, and the elders of that church, assembled
[illegible]gether in a judicative capacity, with the commissioners
[illegible] Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, [illegible] probably from
[illegible] churches of Asia, and in one [illegible]
[illegible], for the good and welfare [illegible]
[illegible]nomed therein." I shall not d[illegible]
[illegible] asserting this proposition, [illegible]
[illegible] of the church in Jerusalem [illegible]

could receive of their being the peculiar people of God, without the law of Moſes, and in the Old-Teſtament propheſies, of which he is author, and which are not of any private interpretation, but muſt be explained by men inſpired by him; and ſeemed good to the apoſtles, by whom the New-Teſtament revelation was made, and this part of it under his infallible conduct; and ſeemed good to the church in Jeruſalem, from whence it behoved this part of the New-Teſtament revelation eſpecially to go forth to the Gentiles. And while it goes forth from this church, we have in it a copy caſt to all the churches for their method of procedure in their affairs, and manner of judging, in any matter wherein they are called to judge; but no pattern for the ſubjection of one church to another; as is manifeſt from what is above ſaid.

You tell me, 2. "Will the apoſtles their being in this "church make any man infer, that the church of Antioch, "in which there were apoſtles alſo, was ſubject unto the "church of Jeruſalem?" As to Paul the Apoſtle his being in the church at Antioch when this queſtion was raiſed there, if you had conſidered the firſt reaſon I gave in my ſpeech for the ſending up of the queſtion to Jeruſalem, and what I have ſaid there on that point, you might have ſaved that clauſe in your query, about apoſtles at Antioch; and I need not here add any thing to what I have above ſaid in the explication of that reaſon. And as to the ſubjection of the church of Antioch to Jeruſalem, I need not repeat what I have been ſaying clearly enough already. Yea, I do not infer from Col. iv. 16. that the church of the Laodiceans was ſubject to the church of the Coloſſians, nor that the church in Coloſs was ſubject to the church in Laodicea. But was I inferring the ſubjection of the churches to one another, from theſe things in my ſpeech, or was I ſhewing the contrary? And was it not your buſineſs to ſhew, that, notwithſtanding theſe things, the ſubjection of churches to one another might be inferred from my ſenſe of Acts xv.? When you could not do this, as good ſay nothing, as nothing to the purpoſe.

Then you tell me you are wearied with ſuch trifling, and you are reſolved to be no more with it; and then you are pleaſed to ſignify, in your own way, what kind of writing mine will be, after you have given over, and warn me of the danger of it. Truly, Sir, the controverſy wherein you have boldly engaged is laborious; and now you may ſee it will weary you before you get near the end of it. The cauſe you are oppoſing is a burdenſome cauſe, and you do well for

yourſelf

yourſelf to let it alone before you proceed further in it. But, notwithſtanding your big words, you appear here like a man throwing down his arms, and begging quarter; only, as the proverb is, "You will not loſe your manly look." Yet compaſſion is due to you; but there is no ſmall danger in giving quarter to your cauſe. You warn me of danger in the event: but I know no everlaſting danger in cleaving to the word of God, and it can comfort in all temporal affliction. And the only danger that is any way in your power to bring me in, is that which has attended diſputers for the truth in all ages, when their adverſaries would diſpute no more with them; and with this danger I am bound to lay my account. Only I think I can declare this for your ſatisfaction, that, till I ſee ſomething of more weight than I have ſeen in your writings, or in any other writings againſt the principles for which I contend, and ſomething new advanced by you or any other, that may give occaſion to explain them further, it will be altogether ſuperfluous for me to write further on the ſubject. And therefore, except you ſay ſomething to the purpoſe from the word of God, beyond what you have ſaid, expect no more of my writings to you upon the diſpute.

Before you part with me, you offer ſome exceptions againſt the ſcriptural evidence I brought for the conſent of the people to the ſentences or deciſions of elders. As to Acts xv. 22. you do not meddle with it, nor except againſt the clear evidence I brought from thence, further than to tell me, that I muſt once anſwer what you have ſaid about the whole church, before I take it for the private Chriſtians or worſhipping aſſembly; and till then, Cyprian's ſentiment is of no weight with you. But I have overthrown all that you ſaid about the whole church, and demonſtrated, from the text and context, that the *whole church* muſt be taken for the worſhipping aſſembly in Jeruſalem, and for no other ſociety. Only I do not remember that I adverted to this aſſertion in your book, Original conſtitution, p. 389. "Before the apoſtles left and finally departed from Jeruſalem, "we find that they, and the elders of that church, aſſembled "together in a judicative capacity, with the commiſſioners "from Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, and very probably from "the churches of Aſia, and in one body enacted ſeveral de"crees, for the good and welfare of the ſeveral churches "concerned therein." I ſhall not demand expreſs ſcriptures for your aſſerting this propoſition, *viz.* the apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem: nor ſhall I trouble you to reconcile

reconcile the firſt part of this your aſſertion with your criticiſm on Acts xvi. 4. and your ſyllogiſm. But I obſerve that, by the *whole church*, you here underſtand the commiſſioners from Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; and ſo Paul and Barnabas, and certain others that came with them from Antioch in Syria, are a part of your *whole church*, there diſtinguiſhed from the apoſtles and elders. And, as I have ſufficiently demonſtrated already, that no commiſſioners from theſe parts can be underſtood by the *whole church*, Acts xv. 22. ſo you muſt excuſe me, that I did not labour in the confutation of that part of your aſſertion, That apoſtles and elders of the church in Jeruſalem very probably aſſembled in a judicative capacity with the commiſſioners from the churches of Aſia; becauſe I did not dream of any commiſſioners coming from theſe churches that the ſcripture calls the *churches of Aſia*, before theſe churches had any being.

Although you do not pretend to confute what I have ſaid on Acts xv. 22. for the conſent of the people; yet you take notice of ſome ſcriptures I noted down as agreeing thereto, and offer ſome exceptions.

And, 1. as to Acts i. and vi. you tell me, "Conſider, and "give a plain anſwer to what I have ſaid on theſe texts, "p. 230. 386. before you take it for granted they are ſub-"ſervient to your purpoſe." But my purpoſe on theſe texts was thus expreſſed, "They (the apoſtles) determined all "things with the conſent of the people," and I brought Acts i. and vi. as very conſiderable inſtances to this purpoſe. Now I look to that page of your book to which you remit me on Acts i. p. 386. I find you there ſaying, "That "the body of the people there preſent were conſenters "I ſhall not queſtion." And this makes it ſuperfluous for me to labour in expoſing the weakneſs of your criticiſm on theſe words of Peter's diſcourſe, *Men brethren*, which I think will be manifeſt enough to any that will be at pains to read it. And when I conſider your p. 230. to which I am referred on Acts vi. I can find nothing there againſt my purpoſe, nor in the following page; unleſs you think your criticiſm on πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, ſufficiently expoſed in my firſt letter, is againſt it.

2. As to Acts xi. 1.---4. which I cited for this purpoſe, plainly expreſſed thus, "And did not diſdain to ſatisfy them "as to all their conduct," you are pleaſed to tell me, "But "for what good purpoſe I know not, if it be not to put me "in mind that Peter endeavoured to ſatisfy the Jews at Je-

"ruſalem

" ruſalem of the juſtneſs of his going unto the Gentiles, " which no doubt was his duty." That they were the believing Jews is manifeſt from ỳ 18. and that they had the liberty to require ſatisfaction from that apoſtle, even as to that part of his conduct, and that it was doubtleſs his duty to endeavour to ſatisfy them, is acknowledged by yourſelf. And therefore I hope you that pretend to be no more but an elder, will not reckon your people indiſcreet if they treat you after the ſame manner in your aſſembly; nor will you queſtion that it is your duty to endeavour to ſatisfy them of the juſtneſs of any ſuch part of your conduct. As to what you ſpeak of a conſequence from this, about judicatures and their juriſdiction, there is no conſequence can be drawn from any ſcripture for the judicatures you intend, nor for their juriſdiction. Next, you tell me, " To ſupport the ſame thing " you ſet down Matth. xviii. but take care all along to ſhift " any direct anſwer to what I have ſaid on that text." But as I am not ſenſible of any care of mine on that head, ſo I am of the mind, that, by what I have ſaid firſt and laſt on that text, I have not left you much to ſay againſt the purpoſe for which I ſet it down there.

3. As to Acts xi. 22. you grant, that the church which is ſaid to be informed about the ſucceſs of the goſpel at Antioch was the church at Jeruſalem; but the conſequence which you draw from thence you refuſe, *viz.* That they who ſent forth Barnabas were the whole members of that church. I had ſaid no more upon this text, but that what was done by the apoſtles was ſaid to be done by the church, becauſe they did it with the church's conſent; and as this was modeſt enough, ſo it is no way contradicted by what you aſſert about what you call the authoritative miſſion, nor by what you alledge from Acts viii. 14. of the apoſtles ſending Peter and John, when the church was all ſcattered abroad except the apoſtles. But you tell me, " If this text prove any thing, it " proves too much, *viz.* That the whole church were equal- " ly concerned, and acted the ſame part in this miſſion with " the apoſtles; for they are ſaid to ſend them forth con- " junctly, without the leaſt hint of one part's acting authori- " tatively, and another merely by conſent." But the text will not prove, that the whole body acted the ſame part in this miſſion with the apoſtles who were a part of it; for, when ſuch a body as a church is ſaid to do any thing, I muſt of neceſſity conceive, that each part acts in the way proper to it; as when I am told the parliament of Britain made a law,

I am not to imagine that there was no difference betwixt the King, the Lords, and the Commons, all acting in that matter.

You ſay further, "In a word, the Apoſtle indites his epiſtle "to the church of Corinth, when he appoints the excommu- "nication of the inceſtuous man:" well, according to your own way of reaſoning in other caſes, it was to be done by thoſe to whom the epiſtle was indited. But you tell me, "Yet it was only the deed of the rulers of that church." Thus, it ſeems, you are of the mind it was only the rulers that were called to mourn, that the inceſtuous man might be taken away from among them, and it was only among them that this inceſt was, and not among the people, 1 Cor. v. 1. 2. And the rulers only were that whole lump that was in danger of being leavened with this leaven, and not the whole body that partook of the Lord's ſupper, ℣ 5. 6. 7. 8. And you think, it ſeems, that the rulers only were not to keep company, nor eat with any that was called a brother, and yet a fornicator, or the like; and they only were to judge theſe within, and put away evil from among them, ℣ 11. 12. 13. But how do you prove that this was only the deed of the rulers acting without the conſent of the people, or that the apoſtle is injoining them to do this thing by themſelves, without the concurrence of the people? For if you be not ſaying this, you are ſaying nothing. All I have in the proof of an aſſertion ſo very bold, ſo croſs to the text, is a criticiſm upon a word in 2 Cor. ii. 6. which our tranſlators have rendered *many*, and you think it ſhould have been tranſlated *chief ones*: for you would have it believed, that, becauſe πλειον, Matth. vi. 25. and xii. 41. 42. ſignifies *more* or *greater*, where it is placed in a compariſon as an adverb; therefore πλειονων, 2 Cor. ii. 6. denotes the rulers of the church in Corinth. And it ſeems you are of opinion, that the forgiving and comforting of that perſon, or looſing him, was only the deed of theſe "chief ones" that bound him, and theſe only were to confirm their love towards him, and to give proof of their obedience to Chriſt, ſpeaking in the Apoſtle, touching that matter. But I hope you will reconcile this opinion of yours with the text and context, 2 Cor. ii. 5.—10.

Then you ſignify, that Cyprian's ſentiment is of no weight with you, till you underſtand, that the whole church, Acts xv. 22. is the worſhipping aſſembly; but I think I have ſaid enough to let you ſee that; and ſo Cyprian's ſaying muſt have ſome weight with you. You ſay he ſpeaks only of his pri-

vate

vate reſolution for his practice; and this purpoſe and practice will not be an argument that the people had a negative on the preſbytery, or that each in the church was to be perſonally preſent, and give their aſſent before any juriſdictional act could be paſſed. You know beſt what you mean by this negative, and you make a beautiful diverſion from the queſtion, when you ſpeak of each in the church being perſonally preſent; but certain it is, that Cyprian did nothing of that kind, of which he ſpeaks, without the counſel of the preſbytery and the conſent of his people. And I think a more laborious anſwer to what I have told you from the ſacred oracles, together with an anſwer to what King brings from antiquity, *Inquiry into the conſtitution, &c. of the primitive church*, chap. vii. and your own Jamiſon, *Cypr. Iſot.* chap. vi. § 5. & 16. toward the cloſe, would have been very becoming, before this very bold aſſertion of yours: "As this was never the practice of the Chriſtian church, ſo it is void of all foundation in the ſacred oracles." Further, what you mean by concurrence in juriſdictional management, I know not; only I know that Jeſus Chriſt is the only Lawgiver in the church, and his word the only law; but if you mean the concurrence of the people with their elders or biſhops in binding and looſing according to his law, then I am of opinion, that every one that conſiders the things wherein elders rule, and the nature of binding and looſing, will ſee a flagrant contradiction in this ſentence of yours. "I am very far from approving miniſters "their lording it over God's heritage; but at the ſame time, "I know no right the people have to a joint concurrence in "juriſdictional management."

I referred you, in the concluſion of my letter, to what I have written on John xviii. 36. 37. of which you have not been pleaſed to take any notice. But I find you, in excepting againſt what I alledged in my ſpeech touching the difference betwixt your pariſhes and the firſt churches, advancing ſome things abundantly confuted in that book, as your notion of kings their being nurſing fathers to the church, and of the identity of the covenant with the Jewiſh nation, and the covenant with the Chriſtian church or kingdom of heaven, p. 5. & 6. of your letter. You alſo complain of me for want of charity to the commiſſion, in ſaying, "That the commiſſion will "not affirm theſe pariſhes and their overſeers are of the ſame "kind with the firſt Chriſtian churches or congregations and "their preſbyteries." And the reaſon of your charge is, "Thus you muſt either imagine they were a ſet of men who "ſubſcribed one thing and believed another, than which

" there can be no more unchriſtian charge; or elſe, they did " affirm, that theſe pariſhes are of the ſame kind and nature " with the firſt Chriſtian churches." Thus, it ſeems, they ſubſcribed not the *Formula*, but your ſenſe of it. And if they ſubſcribed it in any other ſenſe than this of yours, they are unto you bad men. But I am not ſatisfied about your own ſubſcription, if this was it, That the churches planted by the apoſtles were pariſhes; for you have affirmed, that the churches and their preſbyteries planted by the apoſtles were not congregations, as pariſhes are, and the preſbytery of an apoſtolic church was not the preſbytery of a pariſh.

As to what you ſay of kings being nurſing fathers, if Conſtantine's becoming a nurſing father, in your ſenſe of that expreſſion, made not the churches to alter in kind from the apoſtolic inſtitution, or gave not the clergy an excellent opportunity for it, (for truly he was no way to be blamed as they), then I am miſtaken as to the ſenſe of 2 Theſſ. ii. 7. 8. and I once more deſire you may read and confute what I have ſaid on that ſubject in my book on the kingdom of Chriſt. You tell me, " It is not a perſon's living in the local " bounds of a pariſh that conſtitutes him a member of that " congregation." But I am ſure this makes him ſubject, whether he will or not, to your pariſh-diſcipline, and he muſt pay you ſtipend, if he have a heritage there. And what is it that puts him in that pariſh, if it be not living in that local bounds? Is it his coming to the kirk under the influence of cuſtom or ſuperſtition, or coming to the pariſh-miniſter to get himſelf married, or to get a name to his child as neighbour and other does, and as his father did before him; that conſtitutes him a member of that congregation? I am ſure men were not thus conſtituted members of the apoſtolic churches. But you tell me what does it, in the latter end of p. 6. Now, leaving you to explain handſomely what you ſay about binding their children to do as they do, if you leave all the reſt of the pariſh out of the congregation, but thoſe you there deſcribe, I am ſure the congregation will not be parochial, but a church gathered out of the pariſh, and not joining in the pariſh-worſhip. You likewiſe aſſert, that the kingdom or nation of Scotland was brought into church-order at firſt by the preaching of the goſpel. And I marvel that no account of this influence of the goſpel, far ſurpaſſing the influence it had on the people of any nation in the apoſtles days, has come down to us. I have a ſtrong ſuſpicion, there muſt have been ſomething of your external cumulative

mulative power in the caſe of bringing the whole nation or kingdom into church-order. And that is not the power that makes the ſort of Chriſtians that are hated of all nations, and whoſe foes are thoſe of their own houſe; nor the ſort of churches, wherein the members ſtand faſt in one mind and one ſpirit, ſtriving together for the faith of the goſpel, and not terrified by their adverſaries. Then you ſignify, that when a nation is thus brought in, their children are federally holy, as the children of the Jews, though their parents were not to be accounted viſible ſaints. And thus I am to imagine, that the poſterity of the firſt Chriſtians in the eaſtern parts of the world are holy to this day. Neither ſhall I doubt but they are better people than many in Scotland that have acceſs to know more of Chriſtianity than they have.

Thus, Sir, I have taken ſome notice of your letter, and given you occaſion to reconſider your principles with the cauſe you are oppoſing. And I hold what I ſaid in the concluſion of my laſt letter as here again repeated. But I cannot expreſs the confidence in any performance of mine, nor in this, that you expreſs, while you ſignify your ſatisfaction that our epiſtles are to be read before Chriſt's tribunal. As to which, I would deſire to ſay ſomething like what the Apoſtle ſays, 1 Cor. iv. 3. 4. 5. which I beſeech you ſeriouſly to conſider. Things will appear, and perſons too, in another ſhape before that tribunal, and we are to ſtand or fall there only by his word, eſpecially his law of brotherly love to our brother whom we have ſeen, and there we ſhall not be run down by the world's cry, nor exalted by the eſteem of the multitude, or by the things that procure the reputation of the world. Perſons and things, now highly eſteemed, will then be in abomination; and perſons and things now ſet at nought, and had in abomination, will then be had in honour. So, wiſhing you may helped ſo to act in this world, as may tend to your honour in that day, I reſt,

SIR,

Dundee, Sept. 10. 1731.

Yours, as before,

JOHN GLAS.

Of

Of the unity and diſtinction of the ELDER's office.

[Written in the year 1731; and now firſt printed.]

THE officers of Chriſt's inſtitution are diſtinguiſhed, firſt, into extraordinary and ordinary. The extraordinary are, thoſe that were employed in the firſt joining together of the New-Teſtament church, the body of Chriſt, made up of Jews and Gentiles, reconciled to God, in one body, by Chriſt's death, and in laying the plan of goſpel-churches, and in making the New-Teſtament revelation. Such were the apoſtles, the choſen eye-witneſſes of the Lord's reſurrection; and the prophets, inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt for explaining infallibly the Old Teſtament by the things now written in the New; and the evangeliſts, the apoſtles miniſters. Theſe can be ſucceeded by none in that which was peculiar to them; as the nature of their work, completed when the New-Teſtament revelation is complete, does abundantly manifeſt. And yet the churches of Chriſt may be ſaid to have them ſtill, as, in the days of our Lord, the Jews had Moſes and the prophets to hear. But they are ſucceeded in all that was not peculiar to them by the ordinary officers; as we ſee the deacons in Jeruſalem took a part of the work that at firſt was in the hands of the apoſtles, even that miniſtry that is diſtinguiſhed from the miniſtry of the word. And then the elders were employed in the reſt of the work of the apoſtles that was not peculiar to them; ſo that the apoſtles, after the ſetting apart of elders, are diſtinguiſhed from them alſo, no doubt by that which was peculiar to them *.

The ordinary offices, or orders of ordinary offices, are theſe two, and no more; the order of elders or biſhops, and the order of deacons; and beſide the biſhop or elder, and the deacon, with whom we may reckon the deaconeſs, or the widow miniſtring to the ſick, there is no ordinary church-officer.

That biſhop and elder are the ſame in the New Teſtament, is manifeſt from theſe ſcriptures, Acts xx. 17. 28. Tit. i. 5. 7.

* Acts xv. 2. 4. 6. 22. Acts xvi. 4.

1 Pet.

1 Pet. v. 1. 2.; and they are made the ſame in that precious remain of antiquity, Clemens Romanus's epiſtle to the Corinthians, written in the name of the church ſojourning in Rome. But this is not queſtioned among them with whom we have to do at preſent, who acknowledge the diviſion of ordinary church-offices into theſe two, and no more, the elder or biſhop, and the deacon.

And this diſtinction is according to the ſcripture, where we find the miniſtry of tables diſtinguiſhed from the miniſtry of the word *. In the church in Jeruſalem, which was the firſt, and the pattern to the reſt, we find elders and deacons †. And, after that example, in the church at Philippi we ſee the biſhops and deacons. The ſame diſtinction is obſerved in Paul's directions to Timothy about church-officers, when he lays down the characters of the biſhop, and then the characters of the deacon diſtinctly ‡. And, as was noticed before, concerning the diſtinction of the deacon's work from the miniſtry of the word; ſo it is the character whereby the biſhop is diſtinguiſhed eſpecially from the deacon, that he muſt be apt to teach ‖. As all the work of church-officers is miniſtry; ſo we find the office and work of the deacon peculiarly called *miniſtry*, and ſo diſtinguiſhed from the office and work of the biſhop or elder. Thus we find that officer, in diſtinction from the biſhop, called *deacon*, that is, miniſter, or ſervant. We find this ſame diſtinction in Paul's diſcourſe of church-officers to the Romans, to whom he ſpeaks, or the Holy Ghoſt in him, in the proſpect of that extravagant departure from the inſtitution of Chriſt in this matter that was to come to paſs in that church. For as it is the different gifts or powers granted by Chriſt for doing the work of the offices that makes the offices different, ſo he diſtinguiſhes theſe gifts or powers only into two, *viz.* prophecy and miniſtry; and there is no church-officer but what is comprehended under the one or the other of theſe; ſo that every church officer is either a prophet or a miniſter: "Having "then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to "us, whether prophecy, according to the proportion of faith; "or miniſtry, on miniſtring **." Where prophecy is not to be taken for the extraordinary gift, but, as the apoſtle defines it, for the gift of ſpeaking unto men to edification, and

* Acts vi. 2. 4. † Acts vi. xi. 30. xv. xxi. 18.
‡ 1 Tim. i. ‖ 1 Tim. iii. 2.
** Rom. xii. 6. 7.

exhortation,

are biſhops*; yet we find paſtors in diſtinction from teachers; and where there are but theſe two branches in the diſtinction, we muſt underſtand by paſtors both them that exhort and them that rule well†: ſo, though all teachers be governors, as being elders or biſhops; yet where we find teachers and governments diſtinctly mentioned, there, by governments, κυβερνησεις, we muſt underſtand both him that ruleth and him that exhorteth, if we look upon the diſtinction of elders to be there full and comprehenſive of all elders‡. We find the biſhops or elders of a church thus deſigned, τους κοπιωντας εν ὑμιν, *them that labour among you*; και προισταμενους ὑμων εν κυριω, *and your preſidents in the Lord*; και νουθετουντας ὑμας, *and that admoniſh you*‖. And whether the diſtinction of elders be here pointed at, it may be a queſtion. There is another deſignation utterly common to all elders or biſhops, and that is, θεου οἰκονομος, *the ſteward of God*; as appears from theſe words of Paul to Titus: "For this cauſe left I thee in Crete, that "thou ſhouldſt —— ordain elders in every city.—— If any "be blameleſs,—— for a biſhop muſt be blameleſs, as the "ſteward of God**."

From what has been ſaid, it ſeems the biſhop's office is one; and yet there is a diſtinction in that office. The unity of the office appears from the foreſaid diviſion of church-offices, and the gifts or powers given by Chriſt for exerciſing them, into two, and no more; and from the characters requiſite in every one that is at all an elder or biſhop, which we have in Paul's directions to Timothy, 1 epiſt. iii. and to Titus, chap. i. as to the ordination of elders; where, beſides what relates to their diſpoſition and converſation, there is no more required to qualify them for the higheſt parts of the work of that office, and no leſs is requiſite to fit any man for being at all in that office, than this, that he be apt to teach††, and that he be holding faſt the faithful word as he hath been taught, του κατα την διδαχην πιστου λογου, that he may be able, by ſound doctrine, εν τη διδασκαλια ὑγιαινουσῃ, both to exhort and to convince the gainſayers. From this it appears, that the biſhop's or elder's gift is, an ability freely granted by Jeſus Chriſt for opening up and applying the word of God unto men. And thus it is that which is called prophecy, Rom. xii. and the gift of ſpeaking, 1 Pet. iv.; and is diſtinguiſhed from miniſtry, the deacon's gift. The diſtinction in the elder's or

* Acts xx. 1 Pet. v. † Eph. iv. 11. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 28.
‖ 1 Theſſ. v. 12. ** Tit. i. 5. 6. 7. †† 1 Tim. iii. 2.

biſhop's

biſhop's office is chiefly manifeſt from theſe two texts, tho' there be alſo ſome inſinuation of it in other texts before mentioned. 1 Tim. v. 17. "Let the elders that rule well be "counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially they that la- "bour in the word and doctrine." Rom. xii. 7. "He that "teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; "he that ruleth, with diligence."

How this diſtinction agrees with the unity of the office, and that unity with this diſtinction, is a queſtion of ſome difficulty, yea, and importance, to them that want to be acquainted with the mind of God in his word, that they may not ſwerve from his inſtitutions, but keep them pure and entire. And ſuch will not be ſatisfied in any explication of the diſtinction that overthrows the unity, nor of the unity that undoes the diſtinction: for to explain one part of the ſcripture in an inconſiſtency with another, is indeed to corrupt the word of God, and wreſt and pervert it. Thus, while men explain the unity of the godhead, aſſerted in the ſcriptures, in ſuch a manner as to deſtroy the diſtinction in the godhead, there alſo aſſerted, or when they explain the diſtinction in ſuch a manner as deſtroys the unity, they wreſt and corrupt the word of God, and make it of none effect to themſelves, while they ſtudy to reconcile it to their own prejudices, and do not ſubject themſelves as little children to the authority of God in his word. Therefore we find our Lord, when Satan tells him, "It is written," anſwering thus, "It "is written again."

The opinion, of a ruler, or ruling elder, that has no power granted him by Jeſus Chriſt for teaching and preaching, or adminiſtrating baptiſm or the Lord's ſupper, that pleads a foundation in the forecited texts, eſtabliſhing a diſtinction in the elder's office, ſeems to overthrow the unity of that office. For ſuch an officer muſt be of another kind than thoſe elders or biſhops whoſe commiſſion we have Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. there being no authority granted there to rule without teaching: "Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I "command you: and lo, I am with you alway, to the end of "the world." And truly, if we conſider the nature of the rule and government of a church, as diſtinguiſhed from the government of the civil magiſtrate, and as it touches the conſciences of men, and as it is the government of Jeſus Chriſt among his willing people, who has afforded the overſeers of a flock of his no other inſtrument of government but his word, we will eaſily ſee, that a ruler that is not capable to teach or preach, or to open up and apply the word of God

unto men in a conſtant way, is indeed a very inconſiſtent piece of work, and an idol ſhepherd. Neither is there any authority granted in that commiſſion to any to teach and preach God's word, or to teach his people to obſerve all that he has commanded, without an authority to baptize the diſciples. So, if there be ſuch a biſhop as rules without a power of teaching and baptizing, he muſt be of another kind than that biſhop whoſe commiſſion is in that text. 2. Such an officer muſt be of a kind different from him that is deſcribed and characteriſed 1 Tim. iii. and Tit. i. For that officer is the ſteward of God, and ſo the diſpenſer of the ordinances of Chriſt to the flock: that officer is apt to teach, and holds faſt the faithful word, as he hath been taught, ſo as to be able, by ſound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainſayers. And if this be not the qualification of a miniſter of the word, or of him that bears the commiſſion Matth. xxviii. where are we to ſeek his qualification in the New Teſtament? But this is the qualification of every elder, as is manifeſt in theſe paſſages. Therefore he is no elder that is not qualified for the miniſtry of the word, and is not a ſteward of the myſteries of God. 3. This officer ſeems to be of a different kind from the elders or biſhops whom Paul exhorts, Acts xx. and Peter, 1 epiſt. v.: for theſe were all paſtors or ſhepherds, feeders of the flock of God. For as Peter, who was an elder of the church in Jeruſalem, received commandment from the Lord to feed his ſheep and his lambs, ſo he gives the ſame commandment to all the elders, and exhorts them to feed the flock which is among them; as Paul exhorts the elders of the church in Epheſus, "to take heed to themſelves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghoſt made them overſeers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood." And from Paul's ſetting himſelf before them as an example in his teaching, and the reaſon he gives, ℣. 29. 30. for his charging them to take heed to themſelves, and the flock, to feed the church, it is moſt evident, that the feeding there ſpoke of cannot be but by men to whom the word of God is committed, as able to teach others: for he ſpeaks to them of a feeding of the flock, in oppoſition to falſe teachers, and to ſome of themſelves that might ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them. And as there muſt be two kinds of rulers or feeders of the flock, the one ruling by the word of God, committed to him as able to teach others, and the other ruling without having that word committed to him as able to

teach

h others; ſo this laſt is not among the paſtors exhorted
?aul in that paſſage, and muſt be a ſtrange kind of a ruler
ı flock of Chriſt, or of his ſheep, that hear his voice, and
›w him. 4. The manner wherein the inſtitution of this
r, that has no ability to teach or preach, is ſought in the
s that ſpeak of the diſtinction in the biſhop's office, ſeems
:ut off the miniſters of the word, acknowledged to be
rs and biſhops, from ruling. For as to Rom. xii. by
ſame rule by which he that ruleth is ſaid neither to teach
exhort, it muſt be ſaid, he that teacheth is not an ex-
:er, and he that exhorteth is not a teacher, and neither
hem rules. And as to 1 Tim. v. 17. by the ſame rule
which it is aſſerted, that there is a ruling elder that is not
iniſter of the word, it muſt be alſo aſſerted, that the mi-
:rs of the word are not rulers, or that the elders that
h and preach do not rule. For the text makes them one
›is, that they are elders; but diſtinguiſhes theſe elders,
ıſcribing ruling to ſome of them, and the word and
:rine unto others: ſo that ruling is hereby made as much
property of the one elder as the word and doctrine is
e the property of the other elder. But the text only
nguiſhes the elders that *rule well*, καλως προεστωτες, from the
rs that *labour*, κοπιωντες, in the word and doctrine; and it
›es not diſtinguiſh elders merely by ruling on the one ſide,
by the word and doctrine on the other. And if it ſhould
lledged, that eſpecially μαλιστα, which imports the diſtinc-
, reduplicates not merely upon *elders*, but upon *elders*
rule well; ſo that the text cannot be underſtood to run
, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of
›uble honour, eſpecially the elders that labour in the
ord and doctrine;" but thus, "Let the elders that rule
ell be counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially the
ders ruling well, that labour in the word and doctrine:"
it muſt be manifeſted, that the text is not capable to
ıken the firſt way, but muſt be underſtood as running in
econd manner; and if it ſhould be taken that way, then
hall be to ſeek as to the neceſſity and uſe of the mere
g elder. For if the miniſters of the word, notwithſtand-
heir labour in the word and doctrine, do not only rule,
ule well, then the work of ruling may not only be done,
well done, by the elders that labour in the word and
ine: and ſo the need and uſe of mere ruling elders, to
the miniſters of the word in ruling, that it may be well
; without taking them off too much from giving them-
ſelves

ſelves as much as they ought to the word and doctrine, or from labouring in it, is utterly taken away.

On the other hand, they that deny the mere ruling elder to be of divine inſtitution, and own no biſhop or elder but him that is apt to teach, and yet think, that a particular church or congregation may be ſufficiently taught, exhorted, and ruled, by one biſhop, as having power to do all theſe, or that all the biſhop's work may be done to full purpoſe in a church without three biſhops, ſeem to overthrow the diſtinction in that office plainly pointed out in the ſcriptures, and to make void Chriſt's inſtitution of a plurality of elders or biſhops in every church. Though the whole exerciſe of the biſhop's gift be called teaching, Matth. xxviii. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 9. yet there is a branch of that work that is deſigned teaching, in diſtinction from exhorting and ruling. We muſt therefore conſider, how the biſhop's gift, which is one, admits of this diſtinction in its exerciſe; and what we are to underſtand by teaching, exhorting, and ruling, as each of them are aſcribed to different perſons, who yet can each of them teach, exhort, and rule. As the apoſtleſhip was one, and yet is diſtinguiſhed into the apoſtleſhip of the circumciſion and the apoſtleſhip of the uncircumciſion *; and as the deacon's gift is one, and yet we find him that ſheweth mercy diſtinguiſhed from him that diſtributeth †; ſo, in the biſhop's office, we find him that teacheth, him that exhorteth, and him that ruleth. And this diſtinction ariſeth, not from any difference in the nature of the gift, nor from ſuch different degrees of that ſame gift as may be found in different perſons, or in the ſame perſon at different times; but from the different objects upon which it is exerciſed, and the different matter contained in the word, applicable to theſe different objects; and from the extenſiveneſs of the biſhop's work, which is ſuch, that though any one biſhop may be employed in all the parts of it, yet he cannot excel in all the parts, and he is denominated and diſtinguiſhed from others, by that part wherein he excels. The biſhop has to do with the underſtandings of the flock, to inform their judgments in the knowledge of the myſteries of the goſpel, and to inſtruct them in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus; and much of the word of God is applicable this way: and he that excels in this, though he can alſo exhort and rule, is called the teacher. For one may be excellent at this that is

* Gal. ii. † Rom. xii.

not

not ſo very excellent at exhorting and ruling. The biſhop has alſo to do with the wills and affections of the flock, to engage or diſengage them, in a ſuitableneſs to the goſpel-revelation, and with the various poſtures wherein theſe are to be found; and much of the word of God points this way, and tends to this purpoſe. He that excels in this, though he can alſo teach and rule, is called the exhorter; and one may excel in this, that is not ſo excellent in teaching or ruling. The biſhop has alſo to do with the outward converſations of all the flock, to order them as it becometh the goſpel: and as the glory of Chriſt's name is much concerned in this, ſo much of the word of God is taken up in this, and is applicable this way. He that excels in the application of the word to this purpoſe, though he can alſo teach and exhort, is called the *ruler*; and one may excel in this, that is not ſo very excellent in the buſineſs of the teacher and exhorter. The elders that excel in ruling, and therefore beſtow their greateſt diligence in that, are the elders that rule well; and the elders that excel in exhortation, and in teaching, and therefore exert their utmoſt, or labour in the word of exhortation and in doctrine, are the elders that labour in the word and doctrine. And they that excel in ruling, and give themſelves mainly to that, are not worthy of blame, though they do not give themſelves moſt to the teacher's and exhorter's buſineſs, but are to be honoured, in beſtowing their greateſt diligence in that part of the elder's work wherein they excel. So likewiſe they that excel in teaching and in exhortation, and labour or exert themſelves moſt in that, are not worthy of blame, for not exerting themſelves moſt in ruling, wherein they do not excel, but are to be honoured for labouring in that wherein they excel. The Apoſtle orders, that double honour, or maintenance, be given the elders that rule well; double the honour that belongs to the deaconeſs: and he appoints, that this double honour ſhould be eſpecially given to them that labour in the word and doctrine, and they ſhould be eſpecially attended to in the giving of this honour; becauſe their labour requires yet greater intenſion of mind and heart, and calls them yet more off from labouring with their hands *, than the diligence of them that rule well does: even as the maſter in ſome handicraft, having ſeveral workmen under him occupied in that ſame craft, while, as he finds needful, he can employ them all in any

* Acts xx. 17. 18. 34. 35.

one

one part of the craft; yet, for ordinary, ſets each of them to that part of it wherein they excel, and gives beſt wages to them that work in the niceſt parts of the craft; and ſo every part of his work is handſomely done, and his buſineſs is managed to ſuch purpoſe as it could not be, if, for ordinary, he employed them all indifferently in the whole of the occupation.

The Lord Jeſus hath appointed a plurality of biſhops in every church, all of them apt to teach, and able, by ſound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainſayers, all of them ſtewards of God: but becauſe the work for which they are thus qualified conſiſts of ſeveral parts, and though each of them can act in each part, yet no one of them can excel in every part; he hath appointed each of them to give himſelf chiefly to that part wherein he excels, that all the parts of the great and good work of a biſhop may be excellently done, unto the glory of his name, and the good of the flock whereof they are overſeers. Suppoſing, then, only one miniſter of the word in a church, applying himſelf to all theſe indifferently, no part of the work could be done excellently; or, ſuppoſing him to give himſelf moſtly to one of them, as he readily will, then the reſt cannot go well forward. Again, if we ſuppoſe two, or three, or more miniſters of the word, all of them labouring in that part which is peculiarly called *teaching*, the judgments of the flock would, in that caſe, be excellently informed, errors and miſtakes corrected, and they would grow in knowledge; but the exerciſe of their hearts and affections would not be anſwerably lively: and it is not likely, that the love of Chriſt and his people, and the hatred of ſelf and the world, would grow exceedingly, while they are not plied with the diligent exerciſe of that which is peculiarly called *exhortation*; nor would their converſation among themſelves, and toward all men, hold pace with their growth in knowledge, or be attended to, and directed with that diligence that might ſerve to make them ſhine as lights in the world, that others ſeeing their good works might glorify their Father in heaven. Growing in knowledge, without the other two, would make monſtrous Chriſtians. The like may be ſaid of them labouring in exhortation: for, in that caſe, the flock would hardly grow in knowledge, nor in zeal of good works, and in an outward converſation becoming the goſpel, while they would be mainly taken up with inward impreſſions on their hearts and affections, and the various poſtures of theſe: and this alſo could not ſtand, or

make

make any right progreſs, without the other two. And if more miniſters of the word than one in a church ſhould give themſelves mainly, in their preaching and other exerciſes, to the direction and correction of the converſations of the flock, and to the buſineſs of preſiding in the diſcipline of the church; this, without the influence of that which is peculiarly called *teaching* and *exhortation*, preſuppoſed to it, and keeping pace with it, would tend to formality, and iſſue in ſomething like Phariſaical righteouſneſs; yea, it could not long ſubſiſt without the other two. And if we ſuppoſe ſeveral miniſters of the word in one church, giving themſelves indifferently to all theſe, none of them could be done to ſuch purpoſe, as by every one of them his giving himſelf moſt to that wherein he excels. And as each of them would do that part beſt, ſo they would themſelves moſt readily grow and improve in that, and be helpful and profitable to one another, as well as to the flock; ſo that one of them could not ſay he had no need of the other.

It was through the pride and indolence of biſhops, and the people's negligence, in holding faſt the apoſtolic inſtitution, that this wiſe and beautiful order was broke through, and way thereby made for the revelation of the man of ſin. And now, ſince men have found the wiſdom of words, or the wiſdom of the ſcribe, and of the diſputer of this world, to be a neceſſary or uſeful (as they reckon uſefulneſs) qualification of a biſhop, a miniſter of the word, and that it required much expence to train them up in that wiſdom, and then to ſupport them, when trained, in ſuch ſtate as might ſerve to beget reſpect to them in the minds of ſuch people as are not ſo much affected with that authority that is proper to the Chriſtian biſhop, they think they do well when they get one biſhop in every congregation, with a company of ſuch elders as can neither teach nor preach, nor adminiſtrate baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, nor excommunicate, without a claſſical preſbytery; and theſe they call *ruling elders*. And of ſuch elders there is no footſtep to be found in the New Teſtament, nor in all antiquity: for after the riſe of one biſhop in every congregation, all the preſbyters or elders in his preſbytery, had power of preaching and adminiſtrating the ſacraments under him. And whereas ſome of the moſt knowing in this matter do not inſiſt for ſuch elders as church-officers of divine inſtitution, perceiving the inconſiſtency of that with the ſcriptural diſtinction of the orders

of church-officers into two and no more; but contend for them as the repreſentatives of the people, (whoſe conſent in binding and looſing they find in the writings of the ancients, as they might alſo find it in the ſcripture), to preſerve their rights againſt the incroachments of the biſhops; It muſt be conſidered, that the ſcriptural biſhops or elders, and the primitive elders, among whom the one biſhop preſided, were, in the matter of binding and looſing, preſiding in the church or the whole flock, of which they were preſidents, which was the binding and looſing ſociety. So that the people themſelves having a right to be perſonally preſent, and to conſent or diſſent, this right is taken from them by ſuch a repreſentation as cannot be manifeſted to have any foundation either in the ſcriptures, or in primitive antiquity.

A PETITION to the Aſſociate Preſbytery, by four brethren;

With a DIALOGUE upon it by ſix who have as good a right to judge of what is teſtified by Jeſus Chriſt the Lord, in the ſcriptures, as the Aſſociate Preſbytery, or any other preſbytery.

A nation, and a church of nations ſhall be of thee! Gen. xxxv. 11.

Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations. Rom. iv. 16. 17.

There be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed. As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, If any preach any other goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accurſed. Gal. i. 6.——9.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1737.]

Unto the moderator and remanent members of the presbytery aſſociated in the cauſe of the covenanted work of reformation, and teſtifying againſt the ſeveral ſteps of defection from the ſame,

The Repreſentation and Petition of the perſons ſubſcribing,

Humbly ſheweth,

THAT whereas you muſt be looked on as the fitteſt men to convince gainſayers, by the word of God, and the readieſt

readieſt to render to every one that aſketh you a ſcriptural reaſon of the cauſe for which you contend with ſo much zeal, as if your hope depended upon it, we judge it moſt proper to lay before you ſome difficulties we have, as to that covenanted work and ſtate of the church, to which you are bearing witneſs, earneſtly deſiring you may take them under your ſerious conſideration, and do your beſt to ſatisfy us and all others of the truth of your teſtimony by the word of God. For, who can be heard teſtifying concerning the covenant and church of God, without the ſcriptures? Or, who can oblige us to ſerve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt without his law?

Though this may juſtly claim the preference to any other thing about which your time may be employed; yet, to ſave your time, we chuſe to propoſe our difficulties as briefly as we can, in the manner following.

1. We even find it difficult to reconcile theſe nations of Britain and Ireland, being all Chriſtians, or diſciples of Chriſt, and ruled by Chriſtian magiſtrates, as his covenanted kingdom, to theſe words of his, Mark x. 42.—45. "Ye "know that they which are accounted to rule over the na- "tions, [των εθνων] exerciſe lordſhip over them, and their "great ones exerciſe authority upon them. But it ſhall not "be ſo among you; but whoſoever will be great among you, "ſhall be your miniſter; and whoſoever of you will be the "chiefeſt, ſhall be ſervant of all: For even the Son of man "came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give "his life a ranſom for many." And, Luke xxii. 24——30. "For whether is greater he that ſitteth at meat, or he that "ſerveth? Is not he that ſitteth at meat? But I am among "you as he that ſerveth. Ye are they which have continued "with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a "kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me; that ye "may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and ſit on "thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael."

The more we think on this diſcourſe, with the occaſion of it, the leſs are we able to reconcile it with the nations made Chriſtian, and brought or kept in ſubjection to the miniſters of the goſpel, by ſecular power.

2. Nor do we perceive how the following exhortations can apply to a nation of this world, ſuch as Scotland, or how it could remain a nation in obeying it, viz. Luke xii. 29. to 34. "And ſeek not ye what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall "drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind: for all theſe

"things

" things do the nations of the world ſeek after; and your " father knoweth that you have need of theſe things; but " rather ſeek ye the kingdom of God, and all theſe things " ſhall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock, for it is " your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom. Sell " that ye have, and give alms: provide yourſelves bags " which wax not old, a treaſure in the heavens that faileth " not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupt- " eth: for where your treaſure is, there will your heart be " alſo."

As a nation of this world, ſubſiſting in the purſuit of the deſign of this exhortation would be a thing very extraordinary, we cannot wonder at our Lord's making ſuch diſtinction as he here makes betwixt his little flock, and the nations of this world.

3. We have not yet ſeen any thing that is ſufficient to ſhew us the conſiſtency betwixt the covenanted kingdom, concerning which you teſtify, and our Lord's good confeſſion that he witneſſed before Pontius Pilate, concerning his kingdom, John xviii. 36. 37. And here, for the ſake of brevity, we refer you to the things offered in the explication of that text, in the book, intitled, *The teſtimony of the King of martyrs*, which, no doubt, you have ſeen.

4. Nor can we underſtand how our Lord's words to the Jewiſh nation, Matth. xxi. 43. as applied by Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 9. 10. can be applicable to the ſtate of the nation of Scotland, under the national covenant, or of Britain and Ireland, under the ſolemn league and covenant.

His words are: " Therefore I ſay unto you, the kingdom " of God ſhall be taken from you, and given to a nation " bringing forth the fruits thereof." And Peter ſays to the elect, ſtrangers and pilgrims ſcattered throughout many countries, " Ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, " an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye ſhould ſhew " forth the praiſes of him who hath called you out of dark- " neſs into his marvellous light; which in time paſt were " not a people, but are now the people of God; which " had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

And if you pleaſe to compare this with Exod. xix. 5. 6. and Rom. xi. 17.——20. and tell us how the nations were ingrafted in the days of the apoſtles, and how they were to ſtand, it would ſerve much to clear this whole matter.

We have been conſidering the ſeveral things ordinarily inſiſted on to ſhew a ſcripture-warrant for the covenanted work

to

to which you are bearing witneſs; and we judge it not amiſs to lay before you the exceptions which we are not able to remove, being willing, by your help, to ſee the weakneſs of them, if poſſible.

1ſt, The firſt argument, taken from the covenant the Lord made with Iſrael at Sinai, renewed by the kings and people of that nation, after their backſlidings from it, and by the captives returned from Babylon, we are not capable to reconcile with Gal. iv. 24.——31. and Heb. viii. 6.——13.

The argument ſtands on this foundation, That the new covenant is not another covenant than the covenant at Sinai, but that they are two diſpenſations of one and the ſelf-ſame covenant; contrary to the expreſs words of the apoſtle, and to his whole deſign in theſe texts.

And when we conſider his deſcription of the people related to God in the new covenant, in diſtinction from the people to whom he ſtood related in that old covenant, we cannot apply it to any nation of this world; at leaſt it never was applicable, ſo far as we have heard, to the bulk of the people in Britain and Ireland, far leſs to the whole, no not when they took the ſolemn league and covenant.

And further, when we think of Chriſt in the loins of Iſrael, the children of Abraham according to the fleſh, as the foundation of the relation betwixt God and that nation; and when we view the law or covenant wherein God declared himſelf their God, as given to that nation of which Chriſt was to come, with a deſign that it ſhould be fulfilled by him, as the end of that law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth; we have a queſtion, If theſe who are preſſing upon us a national covenant with God, according to that, be not thereby denying that Chriſt is come in the fleſh? 1 John iv. 3.

2dly, The next argument from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning the nations, ſeems to us to ſerve againſt the apoſtolic explication of theſe prophecies, whereof we offer you one remarkable inſtance, Acts xv. 14.——17. "Simeon hath declared how God at the firſt did viſit the nations, to take out of them [ἐξ ἐθνων] a people for his name. "And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is "written, After this I will return, and will build again the "tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build "again the ruins thereof, and I will ſet it up, that the reſidue of men might ſeek after the Lord, and all the nations "[παντα τα ἐθνη] upon whom my name is called, ſaith the "Lord, who doth all theſe things."

If

If the word that is tranſlated *nations*, in the Lord's commiſſion to the apoſtles to *go and teach all nations*, [παντα τα εθνη] had been ſo tranſlated where-ever it is uſed in the apoſtolic writings, which ſhew us how they executed that commiſſion according to the prophecies, every reader of the Engliſh bible would eaſily ſee, that national churches were never intended in the commiſſion "to teach all nations," nor in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament about the nations.

As all theſe prophecies go upon the footing of that promiſe to Abraham, "In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the "earth be bleſſed," the Apoſtle explains them quite away from national churches, by his application of that grand promiſe, Gal. iii. 13. 14. "Chriſt hath redeemed us from the "curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us;——That "the bleſſing of Abraham might come on the nations "[εις τα εθνη] through Jeſus Chriſt, that we might receive "the promiſe of the Spirit through faith."

We cannot but look on every interpretation of the prophets that is not brought from the New Teſtament, nor directed by it, as a "private interpretation;" and therefore, if we ſhould take up with an application of the Old-Teſtament prophecies to national churches and covenants, ſo very different from the apoſtolic application of them, we might fear our becoming ſome way partakers in that cenſure, which is inſinuated by the Apoſtle, when he is directing Chriſtians how to take heed to the word of Old-Teſtament prophecy, which was confirmed on the mount of transfiguration, 2 Pet. i. 16.——21. and ii. 1. He ſays, "Knowing this firſt, that "no prophecy of the ſcriptures is of any private interpreta-"tion: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will "of man: but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved "by the Holy Ghoſt. But there were falſe prophets alſo a-"mong the people, even as there ſhall be falſe teachers a-"mong you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable hereſies, "even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon "themſelves ſwift deſtruction. And many ſhall follow their "pernicious ways, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall "be evil ſpoken of."

We are of opinion, that not only theſe who deny his Godhead, and deny him as the alone Lord of the church, are to be accounted deniers of the Lord that bought them, but they alſo who deny his dying teſtimony concerning his kingdom, and his redeeming a peculiar people out of every nation, according to the prophecies, Titus ii. 14. Rev. v. 9. and who

deny

deny his giving himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world, according to the will of God and our father, Gal. i. 4. or who deny the neceſſary connection betwixt ſuffering with him in this world, and reigning with him in the world to come, 2 Tim. ii. 11. 12. and iii. 12. 13. The Apoſtle ſignifies this was to be done by men that ſeemed to be bought by the Lord, and not expreſsly, but under a cover, and by private interpretations of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament; ſo that we cannot vindicate them from this charge, who would build a worldly kingdom to Chriſt in the nations of this world, upon the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, about the nations; thus fulfilling their own luſt after power, and wealth, and worldly eaſe, to the great reproach of Chriſtianity. And the Apoſtle offers us an excellent preſervative againſt all the feigned words whereby ſuch falſe teachers draw the multitude, when he ſays, in the concluſion of his diſcourſe on that ſubject, chap. iii. 2. "That ye may be mindful of the words which were "ſpoken before by the holy prophets, and of the command-"ment of us the apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour." See likewiſe 1 John iv. 5. 6.

3*dly*, We hear another argument boaſted of as invincible, from a prophecy in the book of the Revelation, chap. xi. 15. But when we conſider that text and context, we ſee not ſufficient reaſon for this boaſting: for the words of the text are, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of "our Lord and of his Chriſt," (or, "are become our Lord's "and his Chriſt's,") "and he ſhall reign for ever and ever." And we are as ſure that no kingdom of this world will ſtand "for ever," as we are that Chriſt's "kingdom is not of this "world." The context, ℣ 17. 18. repreſents the nations as angry at Chriſt's kingdom to the end; even as he ſaid, his people ſhould be "hated of all nations," and ſhould "en-"dure it to the end," Matth. xxiv. 9.——13.

Whether we take this text in the Revelation to refer to Dan. ii. 7. or explain it by what follows, in the more particular account of the events of the ſeventh trumpet, eſpecially by what is ſaid, Rev. xx 4.——6. and xxi. 24.——27. and xxii. 5. we cannot find the accompliſhment of it in any time before the reſurrection of the juſt, and the putting down of all rule, and all authority and power; and then ſhall that promiſe be performed, Rev. ii. 26. "He that overcometh and "keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power "over the nations, and he ſhall rule them with a rod of i-

"ron;

" ron; as the veſſels of a potter ſhall they be broken to " ſhivers, even as I received of my Father." But till that time Chriſt muſt rule in the midſt of his enemies; as it is ſignified that the nations are angry till his wrath come, as the recompence of their anger.

It were eaſy to ſhow, from the book of the Revelation, that the followers of Jeſus Chriſt muſt remain in a humble ſuffering ſtate, in conformity to their leader, " the Lamb " that was ſlain," until the time of Antichriſt's deſtruction, by the brightneſs of his ſecond coming, even the time of their conformity to him in his reſurrection from the dead. See, for inſtance, Rev. vii. 9. 13. 14. And you would contribute much to the removing of our difficulties about your teſtimony, if you ſhould take pains to ſhew us, how a body-politic, a kingdom, or nation of this world, can become the kingdom of Chriſt, by devoting itſelf to conformity to him in his humiliation and ſufferings in this world, in the hope of conformity to him in his reſurrection and glory in the world to come.

We find the outer court not meaſured, " becauſe it is gi- " ven to the nations who tread the holy city under foot " " forty-two months," Rev. xi. 2. And we ſee " the whore," or falſe church, " ſitting on many waters," *i. e.* peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, Rev. xvii. 15. And " power is given the beaſt over all kindreds, and tongues, " and nations, and all that dwell on the earth worſhip him, " whoſe names are not written in the ſlain Lamb's book of " life, from the foundation of the world," Rev. xiii. 7. 8. Theſe are the nations brought under the falſe church, by the power of the kings of the earth that commit fornication with her. The Roman church is very confident, that the nations and kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of our Lord and his Chriſt, by ſurrendering themſelves to her, and applies the prophecies about the nations with as much aſſurance to the Chriſtian kings and nations in her communion, as they can be applied to the covenanted kingdoms that caſt off her uniformity, and put on another in its place; but in both theſe applications we muſt take nations and kingdoms in the very ſame ſenſe, and in both we muſt underſtand the kingdom or dominion of Chriſt to be the rule and authority of the clergy over the nations of this world, through the power and ſtrength of the kings of the earth given unto them to make uniformity, [ποιησαι μιαν γνωμην], according to the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, Rev. xvii. 13. 17.

If we be not ſatisfied in the true ſigns and wonders wrought in confirmation of the New Teſtament when it came forth, and be not willing to reſt in the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt ſealed by his blood, and the teſtimony of his Spirit in his martyrs the apoſtles, which is only pure and entire in the New Teſtament ſcripture, we may hear every ſet of clergymen teſtifying of their uniformity, and their kingdom, and pleading the blood of martyrs, ſigns, and the wonderful concurrence of Providence, in confirmation of their teſtimony; but when it comes to this, the Roman church has more of this kind to pretend than any of them, though, when they inſiſt on this, they take to themſelves one of the cleareſt marks of Antichriſt, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. 10. 11.

4thly, It is not eaſy to ſee how the argument for national covenanting is drawn from the practice of the churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1.——5. The foundation of the argument is to be ſought, eſpecially in the Apoſtle's ſaying, That "the churches of Macedonia firſt gave their own ſelves to "the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." And it muſt go upon ſuch an interpretation of theſe words as this is, *viz.* the churches of Macedonia devoted themſelves firſt to the Lord, as one national church, in a covenant, whereby Macedonia became the Lord's nation, bound to employ its whole power for the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, as the only religion of that country, and for the extirpation of every other; and next, they devoted themſelves to the miniſters of the goſpel, to walk together in uniform ſubjection to them, and to bring the whole country into that uniformity, by the ſaid extirpating power.

But nothing can be imagined further from the mind of the Apoſtle, and the caſe of the churches of Macedonia, than this is. It is ſurpriſing, that a foundation for any thing of this kind ſhould be ſought, in the Apoſtle's ſetting forth the rich liberality of the churches of Macedonia in their affliction and poverty, as an example of moſt chearful liberal alms-giving; and eſpecially in his ſetting forth their unexpected forwardneſs in it, as "firſt giving themſelves," in what they gave, "to the Lord," for the relief of his poor ſaints, and next "to them" whom they preſſed to take the charge and truſt of that gift, wherein they "gave themſelves."

When we look at the erection of the churches of Macedonia in Philippi, Theſſalonica, and Berea, Acts xvi. and xvii. we ſee nothing of any covenant among them, but the New Covenant or Teſtament, the goſpel preached to them by the apoſtles,

apoſtles, which came to them in power, and they believed it, and obeyed it, in the face of an adverſe magiſtracy and mobility, ſo that they received the word in much affliction; and this continued, as the epiſtles to them inform us, Phil. i. 27.——30. 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. 14. 2 Theſſ. i. 4. And they were not ſuffering for any worldly kingdom, nor animated in their ſufferings by any hope, but the hope of reſt and glory with Chriſt at his coming, and his kingdom, 2 Theſſ. i. 5.——10. Yea, the Apoſtle tells us, they were "in a great trial of affliction," when they did this notable deed of charity; and not only ſo, but in "deep poverty;" and therefore in the worſt ſituation in the world for working up a national covenant; but, inſtead of projecting any thing like this, they were very forward to make themſelves yet poorer, for the relief of the ſaints in another nation, thus purſuing, to their power, the deſign of the Lord's exhortation, Luke xii. 29.——34. which we called you before to conſider as no way agreeable to the deſign of a nation or kingdom of this world.

There is not the leaſt inſinuation, that the churches of Macedonia were one national church united in a common council of elders ruling over them: for the apoſtle calls them ſtill the churches of Macedonia; and they were as far from being the bulk of the people of that country, as their practice was from being ſuited to the ſtate of it. When we narrowly conſider the frame and ſituation of theſe, and all the other churches in the New Teſtament, with all that is ſaid there of their practice, we have the juſteſt ground to fear their way has been expreſsly abjured, under the name of Independency in ſome of the national engagements to which you ſtand bearing witneſs.

Having thus laid our difficulties before you, we beſeech you to take them to your moſt ſerious conſideration, and do your beſt in the way that ſhall ſeem to you moſt proper to ſatisfy us; and we likewiſe crave you may conſider the pamphlet, intitled, *A ſupplement to Mr Erſkine's ſermon*, with that intitled, *The right of the Chriſtian people, and the three directions for reformation there propoſed*; becauſe, if no fault be found in them, they ſeem to point out a far ſhorter and plainer way of reformation to Chriſt's people, in all times and places, according to his word, than the way of national covenants.

If the difficulties, which we own have ſome weight with us, ſeem light in your eyes, you can the more eaſily remove

them; and we hope you will not diſdain to do an eaſy thing for the relief of ſuch as you are ready to lament, as labouring under the power of error; but if you cannot, or will not, give us any ſatisfaction in this matter, you cannot blame us if we diſſent from you, and ſtand to the beſt light we can have from the teſtimony of Jeſus againſt you.

JOHN GLAS.
JAMES CANT.
GEORGE MILLER.
ROBERT SANDEMAN.

A

A DIALOGUE upon the Petition.

J. C. IT ſeems we ſhall get no anſwer to our petition.

J. G. Did you expect any but ſuch as you have in the *judicial teſtimony?*

J. C. I ſee none in that teſtimony. It is true, they beſtow a few words in teſtifying againſt the ſectarians, for allowing the power of the keys to the community of the faithful. And in this ſome of the moſt able defenders of Preſbytery are teſtified againſt as ſectarians; yea, if I miſtake not, the famous Gilleſpie * was ſuch a ſectarian. But as to our petition, it would ſeem every thing is avoided that might appear to have the leaſt reference to it. Yet, I muſt own, I expected they would not think it below them to offer what they had to ſay from the ſcripture, againſt our exceptions to their arguments for national covenants. Our Lord even anſwered Satan, "It is written again," and condeſcended to reply to the pitiful objections of the gain-ſaying Jews.

R. S. To what purpoſe would they give themſelves the trouble of reconciling theſe covenants with the objected texts of ſcripture, while their people are as firmly perſuaded of the divine authority of them, as of the bible itſelf; and, for ought I ſee, upon the ſame grounds? The people who wanted the judicial teſtimony as a prop to their faith, in this day of defection from that ſort of faith, will reſt ſatisfied, to find ſuch men as the petitioners, ſtanding in the teſtimony, with the odious (though very ancient †) name *Sectarian*, faſtened upon them *in a judicial way.*

G. M. And they have nothing to fear from the objections againſt the covenants, as to others who incline not to deny the covenants, for fear of the people, while the faſhionable wits, who pretend to think freely, will not beſtow a thought on ſuch a controverſy. A diſpute of ſome greater moment fills their heads.

J. C. It ſeems you think the Aſſociate Preſbytery teſtify only the voice of the people, as if they were their ambaſſadors; and inſinuate, that they regard not ſo much what is

* Diſpute againſt the Engliſh Popiſh ceremonies, part 3. dig. 1. and 4.

† Acts xiv. 5. 14. and xxviii. 22.

true, as what will go cleverly down; and look on ſcriptural arguments brought againſt them, juſt according as they reckon they will take with the world. I confeſs this is no exceſs of charity for them.

R. S. They may ſtill be minding truth, and perhaps only differ in the way of coming at it. You perſuade us to ſee the truth of the ſcriptures, and the ſenſe of them, with our own eyes; but every man that is zealous for truth, goes not this way to work. The Roman Catholics, who would burn men for their truth's ſake, believe as the church believes.

G. M. Nor is that confined to the Papiſts; very firm Proteſtants find out their truth by the majority of voices of orthodox commentators and divines; and ſome never queſtion, that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

J. G. I ſhall not deny that the tradition of the elders, and the approbation of the multitude, hardens them againſt all objections that can be brought to them from the ſcriptures. But I cannot help thinking, that their ſolemn ſilent diſdain of our objections, may even be a cover for weakneſs: for it would be hard to think, that they find themſelves capable to anſwer them, and yet will not do it.

J. G. You are going too faſt, upon the ſuppoſition that nothing has been anſwered to the petition, which may prove a miſtake: for as they were left to anſwer it in the way that ſhould ſeem to them moſt proper, I have heard that the exception to the third argument, from Rev. xi. has been refuted from the pulpit by the "Declarer and detector of ſectarian "errors."

R. S. Yes; they ſay our profeſſor of divinity, who had before boaſted in that argument as invincible, has been crying out againſt the deluſion of putting off the reign of the ſaints till the coming of Chriſt to judgment, and till the reſurrection.

J. G. But did he confute that deluſion, as he calls it, by the ſcripture, or only make a bold aſſertion, and raiſe a ſtrong cry againſt it, as uſual?

J. G. I ſuppoſe he uſes to back his aſſertions with quotations of ſcripture; and, according to his ordinary way of citing it in proof of what he ſays, he needs be in no ſtrait.

R. S. What think you then of this text? "In my fa-"ther's houſe are many manſions; I go to prepare a place "for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will "come again, and receive you to myſelf, that where I am "there ye may be alſo."

G. M.

G. M. And what is that to the purpoſe? or what would he make of as many texts as can be cited, to ſhew, that the Lord and his people will meet at his coming, and never more be ſeparated?

J. G. This muſt be it, That as Chriſt went to heaven to prepare a place for them, they muſt be inſtantly taken up into heaven, when he comes again, and not ſtay to reign with him on the earth.

G. M. We muſt ſuppoſe, then, they are not to ſtay to judge the world, or that the judgment is to be at an end in twenty-four hours. Whereas Peter, when ſpeaking of that "day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men," ſays, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one "DAY is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thou-"ſand years as ONE DAY *."

J. C. I would fain know what the Profeſſor will ſay of the New Jeruſalem (which is now above, where Chriſt is) "coming down from God out of heaven." Will not the ſaints poſſeſs "the beloved city †" when it comes down? Or, is it his opinion, that it will come from heaven to be inſtantly taken up again?

R. S. What he will ſay to that, I cannot pretend to gueſs, till I ſee what Durham ſays of it; but, in the New Teſtament, I find the great day of judgment, wherein the church will appear with Chriſt in glory, called "the times of reſti-"tution of all things ‡", even as the goſpel-day is called "the times of refreſhing". And why may not he allow the thouſand years of the ſaints reign on the earth to be the firſt of theſe times of reſtitution?

J. G. It is moſt certain, from John xiv. 2. and 3. and 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. 17. the ſaints will never be ſeparated from him, after they are gathered to him, at "his appearing, and "his kingdom;" but that they will inſtantly go to reſide in the third heaven, where he now is, would be a very wide inference from theſe texts.

W. C. Your profeſſor of divinity cites ſcripture, I think, very much after the manner of our Quakers, and not much leſs againſt the ſcope of it than they, when they ſpeak of the *light within*, as the great thing pointed at in the Bible.

R. S. I never much troubled my head with that jugling ſtory of the Quakers *light within*; and, to the beſt of my uptake, they ſeem to be covered Deiſts. But how come you

* 2 Pet. iii. 7. 8. † Rev. xx. 9. ‡ Acts iii. 19. 21.

to

to claſs our profeſſor with your Quakers, as citing ſcripture againſt the plain ſcope of it?

W. C. Becauſe he either, with the Quakers, allegoriſes the ſcriptures that ſpeak of the reſurrection of the body; and the reign of the ſaints in their reſtored ſtate, into the ſpiritual reſurrection of the ſoul from ſin, and the inward reign. ——————

R. S. He is more ſet on temporals and outwards, I dare ſay, than to confine it there.

W. C. —— Or elſe, as you are inſinuating, he means to ſhew, that the ſcriptures point out a reign on the earth for the ſaints in their mortal ſtate, having all heretics and perſecutors ſubdued under them. But nothing can be more againſt the whole ſcope of the ſcriptures, which teſtify "the "ſufferings of Chriſt, and the following glory," and ſhew us the inſeparable connection betwixt "ſuffering with him" in this life, and "reigning with him" in the life to come. And there can be no doctrine more fitly contrived than this of your profeſſor, to divert Chriſtians from ſeeking after fellowſhip with Chriſt in his ſufferings, and conformity to his death, and to move them away from the lively hope of likeneſs to him in his reſurrection.

Now, if he will not have the ſaints to be "companions "in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt" in this life while they are preſerved under the "trial of faith, unto his "heavenly kingdom", but will inſiſt for an earthly kingdom to them, let him do it; only why ſhould it plead a foundation in the ſcriptures more than our Quakers light within?

And as to what you ſay of temporals and outwards, notwithſtanding their vizard of ſpirituality, they can reconcile God and this world, in their own way, as well as he is able to do in his.

R. S. At this rate, you would make a great many Quakers. But whatever be in this, I am perſuaded the modern opinions concerning the reign of the ſaints on the earth, differ widely from the faith which the firſt ſuffering Chriſtians had of the reign of all the elect with Chriſt in the great day of judgment; and theſe opinions are, in my view, as oppoſite to the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity as Antichriſt is to Chriſt.

J. G. When the kingdom of Antichriſt came, they laid aſide the doctrine of the firſt reſurrection, and the reign of the juſt, wherewith the firſt Chriſtians comforted themſelves under their ſufferings, together with the doctrine of the

neceſſary

neceſſary connection between ſuffering with Chriſt in this life, and reigning with him in the life to come: for, indeed, it was quite inconſiſtent with their kingdom, as being a great mean of comfort againſt it. And to make the kingdoms of this world Chriſt's, in any other way than they became his in the time of the apoſtles, or to plead for a dominion of the ſaints over them, before the "reſurrection of the juſt," is perfectly Antichriſtian."

D. S. The ſtrength of the brethrens teſtimony lies in the word *judicial*; and the force of their argument againſt us muſt be in the word *ſectarian*. And when I ſpeak what I read in the ſcripture, of the firſt reſurrection, and reign of the ſaints, I am confuted by the word *Millenarian*. I confeſs I am at a great loſs with this way of reaſoning: for I can neither be convinced by what I do not underſtand, nor am I capable to make any reply to it.

R. S. If you were one of the profeſſor's ſtudents, you would get an account of all the condemned erroneous opinions, contrary to the orthodox ſtandards, diſtinguiſhed by their proper names, as *Nevatian*, *Audean*, *Arian*, *Eutychean*, *Neſtorian*, *Pelagian*, *Arminian*, *Baxterian*, *Cocceian*, *Eraſtian*, and the like. Theſe would ſerve as beacons to keep you in the orthodox courſe; and if you ſhould find ſcripture pleaded for any opinion new to you, becauſe not in your ſtandards, you needed only think to which of the condemned errors, on the right or left hand, it might be referred; and then confute it, by lifting up your hands, crying, O flat Arminianiſm! or Cocceianiſm! or Baxterianiſm! or (with ſome leſs abhorrence, becauſe it is on the right hand) even Antinomianiſm! Or you might expreſs yourſelf in this manner, This is a *dangerous*, *ſectarian*, or *Millenarian*, or *Latitudinarian* error.

D. S. But I wonder that I hear of no —— *ITES*. Are there no errors marked that way?

R. S. There's no lack of —— *ITES*; as, the *Ebionites* and *Elceſaites*; and among the Gnoſtics, the *Cainites* and the *Ophites*: then you have the *Marcionites*, very famous: then the *Encratites* and the *Apotactites*. And among the Montaniſts, the *Taſcodrugites* and *Paſſalorynchites*. Theſe are —— *ITES* for you. And you have likewiſe the *Antidicomarianites*, or, if you like a ſhorter word, the *Euchites*.——

D. S. —— If you be not coining theſe words, you have certainly taken them off ſome apothecary's pots or ſhuttles,

and are palming them on me for the names of heretics. You may juſt as well ſay *Ipecacuanhaites*.

R. S. No, truly. I own I am in good humour; but I aſſure you there are ſuch names in the liſts of heretics. They may indeed appear frightful to you at firſt; but let not that diſcourage you. In a little time, you will find them as familiar as the names of the drugs to the keeper of an apothecary's ſhop.

D. S. But, in earneſt, I ſee nothing I could propoſe by this ſtudy, if it were not to make myſelf a ſort of a bully in divinity, to fright poor people with words and names. I'll do better to ſteer my courſe by my Bible, and notice the beacons ſet up there. And I am ſure I ſhall have the teſtimony of every man's conſcience who really believes the Bible, that this is the ſafeſt courſe.

R. S. But not ſo eaſy as the other.

D. S. I like eaſe very well; but I fear that ſtudy would eaſe me of ſearching the ſcriptures, and of dependence on Chriſt as his diſciple, to bring me under the yoke of human authority, and ſubject my faith to the dictates of the clergy about truth and error.

Yet, ſeeing you have got into an odd humour about words and names, I ſhall be content to hear you upon a word you have not yet mentioned, becauſe it is taken to imply ſome truth that the profeſſor has been ſaying out of the pulpit we have the impudence to deny.

R. S. Pray what word is that?

D. S. If I mind well, it is *ſpecifically*, or if I have heard right.

R. S. A very proper word for a profeſſor of divinity. But what uſe made he of it, or was he finding fault with us that we did not uſe that glorious word *ſpecifically*?

D. S. No. He ſays we ſectarians deny that the church of the Old Teſtament was *ſpecifically* the ſame with the New-Teſtament church.

J. G. And we may take this as the anſwer of our exception againſt the firſt argument for national covenants.

R. S. Very probably: For ſuch of his people as underſtand not this mytaphyſical term, will be ready to imagine a *ſameneſs* of the Old and New Teſtament church, when no other argument can evidence it.

D. S. But what means the word *ſpecifically*?

R. S. You muſt learn your logics and metaphyſics before you fathom the deep ſenſe of that mighty word.

J. G.

J. G. You may explain it to him by examples.

R. S. Then I muſt explain *generically* and *numerically*, as well as *ſpecifically*.

D. S. I pray you, one of theſe terms of the clergy's trade at once. I have no mind to their buſineſs; and I fear I have not head enough for any one of this *ſort* of words.

R. S. You have explained it already yourſelf.

D. S. You are diverting yourſelf with my ignorance. How have I explained a word I do not underſtand?

R. S. We deny that the church of the Old Teſtament was of the ſame ſort with the New Teſtament church; juſt as you ſay, Theſe peculiar words that you call the terms of the clergy's trade are not of the ſame *ſort* with common words. You own them to be *generically* the ſame, as they are *words*; but you make them *ſpecifically* different, when you call them another *ſort* of *words*.

D. S. And is this the myſtery of *ſpecifically*? Then I have no fear of it: for the ſcripture makes not the Old-Teſtament church and the New of the ſame ſort. I am ſure *fleſh* and *ſpirit*, *earthly* and *heavenly*, are not of the ſame ſort; that is, ſay you, not *ſpecifically* the ſame. Is not this the meaning of *ſpecifically*?

R. S. I think ſo. But the profeſſor would have you own them to be of the ſame *ſort*, and no more different than the church of Antioch and the church of Corinth, two churches of the ſame *ſort*. And ſo he allows you to deny them to be *numerically* the ſame, but not *ſpecifically*.

D. S. He may ſay too, that the church in Corinth differs no more from the church of the firſt-born, than it does from the church in Antioch.

And if he will have all churches to be of the ſame *ſort*, I ſhall be evens with him for once: I'll ſay there is indeed no other church but one; and, if he pleaſes, he may call it *numerically* one.

R. S. And what make you then of the church of the Old Teſtament?

D. S. That church was a ſhadow of the only true church to come, whereof Jeſus Chriſt is the builder; as it is ſaid, "Moſes verily was faithful in all his houſe, as a ſervant, for "a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken after, "but Chriſt as a Son, over his own houſe; whoſe houſe are "we, if we hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of "the hope firm unto the end *".

* Heb. iii. 5. 6

R. S. What ſay you then of the Old-Teſtament ſaints?

D. S. I ſay, the ſaints of the New Teſtament are now builded together with them, into the only true church, that is "built on the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, "Jeſus Chriſt himſelf (the firſt-begotten of the dead) being "the chief corner-ſtone *".

R. S. And what will you make of all the churches you read of in the New Teſtament?

D. S. Each of them is a lively repreſentation of the only true church, as they "alſo are builded together in him for "an habitation of God through the Spirit †".

R. S. Why then call you them and old Iſrael *churches*, ſeeing there is but one true church?

D. S. Even as I call the types of Chriſt's ſacrifice, *ſacrifices*; and as I call that bread and cup in the Lord's ſupper his *body* and *blood*.

R. S. Now I have drawn out your whole *error*. For thus you deny the Old Teſtament church and the New to be *ſpecifically* the ſame; and thus you ſet aſide the *Catholic viſible church*, which you ought to diſtinguiſh from the *inviſible*.

D. S. Hear me then. I own that the only true church, and its communion in Chriſt, as one body, is viſible in every church of the ſaints, having communion in that one bread, and that one cup ‡.

I own again, that there is one viſible rule for all churches, in all nations, without difference, *viz.* the Bible; and the church that comes neareſt to that rule, is the moſt catholic church.

And again, I diſtinguiſh any ſuch viſible church from the true inviſible catholic, as the *ſign* from the thing *ſignified*.

Now tell me, if you can, what more the profeſſor would have. Would he have me to be a Roman Catholic?

R. S. Say a Scottiſh Catholic; for that is what he would have. He wants you to own the covenanted church of Scotland to be of the ſame ſort with the covenanted church of Iſrael.

G. M. But I fear he cannot even grant him that favour, till he ſee that the nation of Scotland ſprang from a promiſe of God, as Iſrael from the promiſe made to Abraham; and till he be ſure, that God made a covenant with the nation of

* Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21.; Col. i. 18. † Eph. ii. 22.
‡ 1 Cor. x. 16. 17. 18.

Scotland

Scotland, according to the covenant that he made with Iſrael, when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt; yea, till he underſtand that Chriſt is to come of Scotland, according to the fleſh, as he was to come of the nation of Iſrael.

D. S. That is what I hope I will never ſee. But if I owned the covenanted church of Scotland to be of the ſame ſort with that of Iſrael, I behoved then to deny it to be catholic.

R. S. As how?

D. S. The covenanted church of Iſrael was a nation of this earth, ſeparated from all other nations to God, as his kingdom, and poſſeſſing a ſpot of the earth as their proper inheritance. But a church of the New Teſtament is a people whom God takes out of any nation, without difference, for his name, and who ſojourn in any country of the world, as ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth. This is catholic. But is there any charm in the word *ſpecifically*, to make this of the ſame ſort with the national church of Iſrael?

R. S. Still you miſtake him. He would have all the nations of the world brought into the ſolemn league and covenant, and ſubjected to the aſſociated preſbytery that bears teſtimony to that covenant. And when that is, there will be a catholic church, *ſpecifically* the ſame with all the nations of the world, proſelyted into the church of Iſrael.

D. S. Say rather, ſpecifically the ſame with the Jewiſh notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom. Say, ſpecifically the ſame with the Roman Catholic, which anſwers to the city where our Lord was crucified.

R. S. You may repreſent the profeſſor as ridiculous to yourſelf as you pleaſe, and give his church all the ill names that the Revelation gives to Antichriſt; but it is far below him to diſpute with you.

G. M. And they who believe his judicial teſtimony will be ſure to look on all that ſpeak againſt his doctrine as dogs barking at the moon.

J. C. So much, then, for barking at the moon.

A SUPPLEMENT to Mr EBENEZER ERSKINE's Synodical Sermon.

[First publiſhed in the year 1732.]

AFter many loud complaints of the evils and corruptions of the day we live in, have been made to no purpoſe; becauſe that which lay at the bottom of them was not found out, and before that no effectual remedy could be propoſed; Mr Erſkine has at length made a diſcovery in his ſynodical ſermon, that deſerves ſome conſideration from them that are not ſatisfied in a zealous indolence, always complaining and doing nothing; but want to be directed into the courſe they ought to take for reforming theſe evils and corruptions. His words are, *Syn. Serm.* p. 26. "I am perſuaded, that carnal notions of the kingdom of Chriſt, which is not of this world, lie at the bottom of many of the evils and corruptions of the day we live in." This is but a hint; and it were to be wiſhed, that he himſelf had taken time to lay open the grounds of his perſuaſion, even though he had thereby prevented himſelf as to ſome things that follow in the ſermon. But ſeeing it is not probable, that he will do this ſo quickly as the evils and corruptions call for a remedy, it ſhould not offend him, that his thought is purſued by another that is of the ſame perſuaſion with him in this matter. And while this is done, it is neceſſary, that the ſcope of his ſermon ſhould be attended to as far as is conſiſtent with the propoſition that is propoſed to be illuſtrated.

It comes in upon the reaſons he gives, why the Jewiſh builders rejected Chriſt, p. 25. 26. where he ſays, 1. "This fatal error of theirs proceeded from their ignorance of Chriſt in the excellency of his perſon, and of the glorious myſtery of redemption and ſalvation through him, Acts iii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 7. 8. They were men of no deſpicable parts, capable enough to toſs an argument; they thought themſelves the only ſeers in Iſrael in their day; *Are we blind alſo?* Yet Chriſt declares them blind like moles in things relating to his kingdom. The leaſt of Chriſt's babes, whom they reckoned among the accurſed mob, had more of the ſaving knowledge of God, and of the things of God, than they;

" they; and the blind leading the blind, both ſtumbled on the " ſtumbling ſtone, and fell into the ditch together. 2. Miſta- " ken notions of the nature of the Meſſiah's kingdom was an- " other cauſe of their rejecting this precious ſtone. They " had formed a notion to themſelves, without any real ground " from ſcripture-prophecy, that the Meſſiah was to appear " in the form of an earthly monarch, and that he was to lift " up the head of the Jewiſh nation, and make the Romans, " and all the nations of the world their vaſſals and tributa- " ries; but finding themſelves miſtaken, they diſown and " crucify him as an impoſtor; which, by the by, ſerves to " diſcover what a dangerous thing it is not to have right con- " ceptions of the ſpiritual nature of Chriſt's kingdom." Having thus far introduced himſelf to the ſubject by the Jewiſh builders, and declared the danger of wrong conceptions of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, he ſolemnly applies what he had been ſaying of the Jewiſh builders to this day, in the remarkable words before noted. And by the ſame rule it is applicable to any day wherein Chriſtianity is corrupted: for it is of the corruptions of Chriſtianity that he is ſpeaking. The corruption of Chriſtianity has ſucceeded in the room of the corruption of the Jewiſh church, which was chiefly owing to the builders. And from thence the rejection of Chriſt, in his miniſters and people, in his truths and the profeſſion of his name, as the Prophet, Prieſt, and King of his church, has proceeded, even as the rejection of Chriſt himſelf flowed from the corruption of religion among the Jews: And both had their riſe from a miſtaken notion of Chriſt's kingdom as ſet forth in the prophecies. Thus far we have Mr Erſkine. But 'tis pity he did not go farther than merely to point out the way. However, keeping his direction in view, and minding the warning he has given of danger in miſtaking the nature of Chriſt's kingdom: Let us go on to conſider, firſt, How the Jewiſh builders that dealt ſo much in the Old-Teſtament prophecies, and explained them to the people, came to form ſuch a notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and next, By a ſuitable application of this to ſome of the corruptions of the day we live in, what he ſays of the cauſe of the evils and corruptions of the day, may appear with ſome evidence to them that want to know the truth in this matter.

As to the firſt, Mr Erſkine ſays, It was without any real ground from ſcripture-prophecy, that they formed that carnal notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom to themſelves; and when he ſays, there was no real ground, he does not deny, but rather

ther inſinuate, that there was ſome appearance of a ground for their notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom in the prophecies. And ſo there was: ſo it behoved to be. The prophecies of the Meſſiah, and his kingdom behoved to be involved in figures: otherwiſe they could not have have been fulfilled by men profeſſing to believe them, as they were fulfilled by the Jews. Even as the New-Teſtament prophecy concerning Antichriſt could never have been fulfilled by men profeſſing to believe the New Teſtament, if it had been ſpoken plainly, and without any proverb. God ſet up the kingdom of David in the prophecies, as a figure of the kingdom of Chriſt, and ſpake of it accordingly. The kingdom of heaven is a myſtery, the hidden ſenſe of a figure; and it has many ſuch myſteries, which the Jewiſh builders were not made to know. They did not know the wiſdom of God in a myſtery; and ſo they took up with the figure, and neglected the hidden ſenſe. Yea, it was not ſo eaſy for them to perceive it as it is for them that have the New-Teſtament revelation, making theſe things very clear that were dark unto the prophets themſelves: and therefore they are yet more inexcuſable than the Jewiſh builders, who have the New-Teſtament revelation complete, and profeſs to believe it, and yet entertain carnal notions of the kingdom of Chriſt. Not only the Jewiſh builders, but our Lord's diſciples, in the days of his fleſh, while he was ſpeaking parables, and before he aſcended to the throne of his kingdom, and poured down the Holy Ghoſt, to make the New-Teſtament revelation full and clear, underſtood the prophecies of a worldly kingdom. But after the New Teſtament revelation, the only infallible explication of the Old, is completed by the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, it is more criminal in them that profeſs to believe it, to imagine ſtill, that, according to ſcripture-prophecy, Chriſt's kingdom muſt be ſome way of this world. And Mr Erſkine believes there are ſome ſuch imaginations in the minds of Chriſtians at this day, when he is perſuaded, that carnal notions of the kingdom of Chriſt, which is not of this world, lie at the bottom of the corruptions of the day. The Jewiſh builders, according to the view they had of the prophecies, which yet had not a real ground in them, imagined, that the Meſſiah was to ſit on David's earthly throne, which the New Teſtament makes the figure of the heavenly; but Chriſtians, ſo called, ſet the kings of Europe on that throne, even as the Chriſtian builders in the days of Conſtantine ſet him on that throne: and in this the Jewiſh builders had plainly the bet-

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ter of Chriſtians, according to the prophecies; for they gave David's throne to the Meſſiah that they were looking for. The expectation that ſome have of a temporal reign of the Jews in their old land, when once they are converted in a national way, and that in their land will be the viſible ſeat of Chriſt's kingdom over all the world, before his ſecond coming, is very like the notion that the Jewiſh builders had of the Old Teſtament prophecies; and they that think they have a real ground in the prophecies for ſuch expectations, need not be ſurpriſed at the great blunder that the Jewiſh builders committed in explaining the prophecies. If we conſider the application that ſome make of the prophecies touching Chriſt's kingdom to Scotland, we cannot be ſurpriſed at the application that the Jewiſh builders made of them to the land of the Jews: for it is manifeſt, that, by the ſtyle of the prophets, the Jewiſh application had ſome way the advantage. And if there was enough ſaid in the prophecies to confute the Jewiſh notion of them, and to render them inexcuſable in rejecting the kingdom of Chriſt in the appearance it made to them, much more are they without excuſe by theſe prophecies who have and own the New Teſtament that explains them.

This ſenſe of the prophecies was the more agreeable to them, that it flattered their pride, and did not remarkably croſs any of their worldly luſts; but rather made way for the hopes of getting them fulfilled. This gave it a vaſt advantage in their carnal minds, and in the minds of the people, over the ſenſe of the prophecies that our Lord and his apoſtles contended for. This made them overlook every thing in the prophecies that ſeemed to croſs this carnal ſenſe of them, or reconcile it the beſt way they could with this ſenſe. Yea, with what difficulty were the diſciples at firſt perſuaded to give up with this carnal ſenſe of ſcripture-prophecy, and embrace the ſpiritual one? It required that mortification to the world and heavenlineſs of mind, that was wrought in them by the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, to reconcile them to the true interpretation of the prophets.

But the ſenſe of the ſcripture-prophecy that did not bear ſo hard on mens luſts as our Lord's interpretation of them did, was not maintained by the Jewiſh builders without a zeal of God and his worſhip and ſervice. They ſhewed the greateſt zeal for the law of Moſes, and for the glory of God, as the author of the Old-Teſtament revelation, in contending for their ſenſe of the prophecies againſt Chriſt, and in re-

jecting him and his ſpiritual heavenly kingdom. They did not imagine, that, in the kingdom of their Meſſiah, wickedneſs and profanity was to take place; very far from it: they expected he would reform the corruptions that were complained of among them; and that, in exalting their nation, he would revive and confirm the covenant made with their nation on Sinai, in all the articles of it, and eſtabliſh the law of Moſes over all nations who were to be bleſſed in the obſervation of that law, and in coming within the bond of that covenant, at the ſame time that they came in ſubjection to the Jewiſh nation. And in this they had by far the advantage of any of them that now profeſs the greateſt zeal for national covenants, or any national form of a church, that can pretend to no more of an intereſt in divine inſtitution, but as they are a copying after that national covenant and church which the Jewiſh builders oppoſed to the kingdom of Chriſt, that was the end of that covenant and church; and can pretend to no other divine inſtitution, but ſuch a ſenſe of the propheeies of the Old Teſtament as that whereby the Jewiſh builders rejected Chriſt and his kingdom.

Though this ſeems plainly inconſiſtent with ſome part of Mr Erſkine's ſermon, yet it agrees not ill with a private letter of his ſome time ago publiſhed, and is perfectly conſiſtent with the ſenſe and true ſcope of the paſſage in the ſermon that was propoſed in the beginning to be illuſtrated. And it has likewiſe ſome countenance from another part of the ſermon, where he ſays, p. 36. inference 6. "See from what is ſaid "what it is makes a flouriſhing church. It is not her exter- "nal peace and plenty or proſperity, not her connection in "politics with kings or parliaments, patrons, heritors, or "any other ſet of men: but her connection with the chief "corner-ſtone. This, and this only, is what beautifies the "whole building, and makes her increaſe with the increaſe of "God." It will not be very eaſy to declare how far a national church and covenant, and ſhutting the door unto places of civil or military truſt on ſuch as are not well affected to that church and covenant, can take place without ſome connection in politics with kings and parliaments, or with the legiſlative civil power. And, ſeeing this connection at leaſt adds nothing to the beauty of the building, there can be no real loſs in dropping it, that we may give ourſelves wholly to the maintenance of the connection with the chief corner-ſtone, which alone beautifies the building, and makes the church increaſe with the increaſe of God. The natural tendency of

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a national covenant and a national church, depending on that connection with kings, parliaments, and armies, is external peace, by the deſtruction of ſects, plenty or riches to the clergy of that church, and worldly proſperity; which, Mr Erſkine ſays, is far from being that which makes a flouriſhing church. And he reckons that the increaſe of the church that comes that way is not the increaſe of God; that only is with him the increaſe of God that comes by holding the head, which was the kind of increaſe before any king or kingdom of this world owned Chriſtianity.

Here is a queſtion, If there be any real ground in ſcripture-prophecy for this ſenſe of the words of the prophets, that the nations of this world are to be churches, and in covenant with God as Iſrael was? And the Apoſtle James ſeems to determine it, in that ſpeech he made Acts xv. in the church in Jeruſalem, to which the other apoſtles and the elders of that church, with that whole church, agreed; he ſays, "Si-"meon hath declared how God at the firſt did viſit the na-"tions to take out of them a people for his name, and to "this agree the words of the prophets." If we conſider theſe words with the words that follow, we cannot be at a loſs to underſtand the Holy Ghoſt's ſenſe of his own words in the ſcripture-prophecy, when he ſpeaks of the nations being brought into the church, and called by God's name, or having his name called on them; and among all the private interpretations and different ſentiments of men about what it is that the words of the prophets agree to about the nations, this is the mind of the Holy Ghoſt, the inſpirer of the prophets. We may alſo ſee from that context, that the kingdom of Chriſt, as it ſtood when James made that ſpeech, was the antitype of the kingdom of David: and that the ſubjects of that kingdom were but a remnant of the Jewiſh nation, and a remnant of every other nation where he had any ſubjects. This is Chriſt's kingdom, his church, of which the prophets ſpake; and for this ſenſe of the prophets, the apoſtles contended againſt ſuch as would not admit the nations upon whom God's name was called into the church, without the Jewiſh national covenant.

Another reaſon of the miſtake of the Jewiſh builders about the Meſſiah's kingdom ſpoken of in the prophets was, that they took not the ſcripture by itſelf to compare it with Chriſt's doctrine, but according to the tradition of their fathers. And the tradition of the fathers about the Meſſiah's kingdom being more agreeable to their worldly luſts, where-

with their zeal for their religion was not inconſiſtent, than Chriſt's doctrine was; this, with the high eſteem they had of theſe fathers, laid them under ſuch a byaſs againſt Chriſt's kingdom, which is not of this world, as nothing but the power of God's grace could conquer. The gratifying of their pride and other luſts, in a connection with zeal for their religion, and the authority of their worthy anceſtors, whoſe greatneſs and goodneſs, and capacity to underſtand the prophecies, it was not lawful to call in queſtion, made up a three fold cord not eaſily to be broken.

And thus were Jewiſh builders led into that fatal carnal notion of the Meſſiah's kingdom, wherewith our Lord's appearance and doctrine was ſo inconſiſtent, that they could not bear it, but rejected him. They could not endure a Meſſiah deſtitute of worldly honour and wealth, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, a pattern of ſelf-denial in all reſpects, and calling all his followers to deny themſelves, and take up their croſs and follow him, and, inſtead of a worldly kingdom, telling them of the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom not coming with obſervation, a kingdom within men, and a kingdom that they could have no part in by virtue of that birth of which they boaſted as they were the ſeed of Abraham, and which gave them a part in the Old-Teſtament kingdom, unleſs they ſhould be born again of the Spirit, born from above; and, inſtead of theſe great things they were looking for on earth by the Meſſiah, promiſing nothing in this world without perſecution, and raiſing mens expectations from this world to the world to come. This was as alien from the Jewiſh ſenſe of the prophecies, as the following queſtions are alien from the prophecies and the New-Teſtament ſenſe of them, *viz.* Whether theſe called *malignants* ſhould have places of truſt civil or military? Whether a national church ſhould be governed by a ſubordination of courts, compoſed of preſbyters acting in parity, or alſo by a ſubordination of officers? and, Whether the national clergy ſhould manage the king and parliament, *&c.* or the king and parliament manage them? And there has been as much zeal as the Jews could boaſt of ſpent upon theſe ſame queſtions.

Now, as the carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom lay at the bottom of the rejection of our Lord by the Jewiſh builders, ſo, thinks Mr Erſkine, lies it at the bottom of the rejection of Chriſt in the day we live in. And, when we come to the application of what has been ſaid of the Jewiſh builders unto the evils and corruptions of the day we live in, it is needleſs

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to go further than that inſtance that gave occaſion to all the zeal expreſſed in the ſermon; which is, the depriving of the Chriſtian people of their right of chuſing their own paſtors by the late act of aſſembly, whereby it is put in the hands of heritors, many of them diſaffected to the church, and of elders or repreſentatives of the people, the majority of both together; and this, together with patronages, by law eſtabliſhed, which the church calls a grievance, and yet ſubmits.

Mr Erſkine is of the mind, that a carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom lies at the bottom of this evil and corruption of the day we live in; but how? is indeed the queſtion; which, till he do it to better purpoſe himſelf, muſt be anſwered by way of inference from the hints he has given. And how ſhould this evil come, but by the church's connection in politics with the powers of the earth, that ſerves unto the external peace, plenty, and proſperity of the church? This connection began in the days of Conſtantine, when the man of ſin was brought forth. The churches had been pregnant with this conception of iniquity before; but then it was brought forth, and from thence nurſed up by the Chriſtian emperors, till the Roman empire was broke into ten kingdoms, and yet remained united in the one clergy when the man of ſin, being come to age, ſat down on his throne, and began to have poſſeſſion of the ſuperiority over the nations, in the bounds of the Roman empire, that the rulers of the empire had before.

In the days of Conſtantine, the Chriſtian builders, ſeeing a door opened for worldly honour, riches, and eaſe, and forgetting the old doctrine of ſelf-denial, mortification to the world, and of the ſpiritual heavenly nature of Chriſt's kingdom, which they could not but think of under the croſs, began to inſiſt on the old Jewiſh ſenſe of the prophecies, and to compliment Conſtantine, a Chriſtian catechumen, with David's throne, and ſo to call upon him to act ſuch a part about the church, as the good kings of Judah did about the temple: and the good man accepted the compliment, complied with the exhortation of his teachers, and thought he could not do too much for the church, to make her flouriſh with external peace, plenty, and proſperity; and that was all that was in his power.

The Chriſtian builders had men of divers occupations profeſſing Chriſtianity before; but they never imagined, that the profeſſion of Chriſtianity made any further change in theſe occupations,

cupations, than to make the men more upright and ſelf-denied in them: ſo that there was no difference betwixt a Heathenish and a Chriſtian phyſician or mechanic, but in the principles and ends of their actions in theſe occupations. But they made another kind of diſtinction betwixt a magiſtrate and a Chriſtian magiſtrate. He had ſuch duties incumbent on him as the kings of Judah had, about the worſhip of God; as, to cut off heretics and ſchiſmatics, to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity as the religion of the empire, in the room of Heatheniſm, and to ſuffer the open exerciſe of no other religion, and to make proviſion for the maintenance of the clergy.

When ſuch duties were incumbent on the Chriſtian magiſtrate, and ſuch ſervices to be done by him, he behoved to have ſome privileges connected with theſe ſervices. The nature of the thing required it; yea it was not diſagreeable to the nature of the Chriſtian law, that always connects privileges with ſervices: ſo that if Chriſt's law required theſe ſervices of the magiſtrate, and if the New Teſtament made him the executer of the laws of Chriſt, it is very peculiar, if it granted him therewith no privilege. It is certain, at leaſt, it was not ſo in the caſe of the kings of Judah.

When the earth helped the woman at the Reformation, or when ſome of the powers of Europe interpoſed, no doubt with political views, to ſtem the tide of Romiſh perſecution, the preachers and profeſſors of the goſpel, being thus eaſed, began to do the ſame thing with the kings and princes of the earth, that the ancients did with Conſtantine, and required of theſe kings and ſtates, that there ſhould be a legal proviſion for the maintenance of the miniſters ſet in the room of the pariſh-prieſts; and this after the church-lands had been alienated. It was, no doubt, every way reaſonable, that, in conſequence of this, the legiſlative power of the ſtate ſhould have ſomething to ſay, as to theſe that ſhould enjoy that maintenance which the law provided.

The connection of the church with the powers of the earth, could not but make a different outward ſtate of the church from that which was before there was any ſuch connection, and produce effects, that all the influence of the goſpel, and the ableſt miniſters of it, and the connection of the church with the corner ſtone, did not produce before. For it made the people of the nations come into a profeſſion of Chriſtianity, not of free choice, nor by the influence of the goſpel itſelf upon their minds, but by the influence of the powers of the earth. And in conſequence of this, the

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moſt of the people born and bred in a country, ſo made and called *Chriſtian*, are Chriſtians the ſame way that people born and bred in a Heatheniſh or Mahometan country, are Heathens or Mahometans. Thus we have heard of a great church, and leſſer churches alſo come of her, and ſeparated from her, boaſting of being the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and the mother of God's children, while, at the ſame time, the moſt of the children appear plainly never to have been begotten by the ſeed of God's word, but by the influence of the kings of the earth, ſtanding in connection with the church. And this is very like what the New Teſtament ſpeaks of the mother of harlots, committing fornication with the kings of the earth. And in conſequence of this, the children of the true church, that appeared to be begotten by the word of God, have been ſeen living with that mother of harlots, and with theſe harlots ſprung of her, and ſeparated from her, as children in the ſame family with that ſpurious brood; yea, and ſo far impoſed on, as to call any of theſe harlots their mother; and yet this is nothing elſe but the daughter of Zion dwelling with the daughter of Babylon. And the Lord's call to them now is to come forth, that they ſhare not in her ſins, and in conſequence of that, of her plagues: for he that ſcattered Iſrael will gather him and feed him as a ſhepherd doth his flock, and bring his ſheep out of all places, where they have been ſcattered in the cloudy and dark Antichriſtian day.

The native conſequence of this conjunction of the church, and the kings of the earth, to bring forth Chriſtians, was ſuch a form of the Chriſtian profeſſion, as is conſiſtent with a viſible denial of the power of it, or ſuch as under which men might viſibly ſeek themſelves, and follow the courſe of this world, and fulfill the luſts thereof, and ſo Chriſtianity become a broad way, wherein all the people of a nation might walk with eaſe, as Chriſt foretold falſe prophets would make it, and not a ſtrait and narrow way, as our Lord and his apoſtles made it: for the nations, peoples, and multitudes, begotten between the church and the kings of the earth, could not walk in that way: The gate was too ſtrait, and the way too narrow for them. And it can be no wonder, to ſee even a great multitude ſtirred up to great zeal for the ſtricteſt form of national Chriſtianity, while others are for a more eaſy form; becauſe the ſtricteſt form of it muſt ſtill be ſo eaſy as to admit of a whole nation under it: and men muſt be fond of a way wherein they may walk with

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ſome eaſe to their luſts, and yet believe they are in the narrow way that leads to eternal life. Though the diſappointment will be hard upon them in the iſſue, yet, in the mean time, it gives their conſciences ſome more eaſe, and it ſoothes their pride too.

Another conſequence of this connection of the church with the powers of the earth, is that which is called the *coercive power of the magiſtrate about the church:* for by the ſame influence behoved the nations to be kept in ſubjection to the national form of Chriſtianity, by which they were at firſt brought under it: and as this was not owing to the influence of the word of the goſpel, ſo neither could the clergy truſt to it for the other. And as if the ſanctions of Chriſt's laws were not ſufficient, and he not ſufficient to make them effectual unto all their ends, the magiſtrate behoved to annex ſanctions of his own to the laws of Chriſt, and ſo make them effectual upon a people that would not be influenced by the ſanctions that Jeſus Chriſt had annexed to his laws: So that the profeſſed ſubjection of theſe people to theſe laws, was not a profeſſion of ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt and his authority, as was the profeſſed ſubjection of men to the goſpel at the firſt; but a profeſſion of ſubjection to the magiſtrate inſtead of Chriſt. Thus Mr Erſkine, in one of his ſermons, cannot be defended from bringing an unrighteous charge againſt theſe potentates, that take upon them to grant a toleration to any doctrine, or any worſhip, inconſiſtent with the doctrine, worſhip, and government, that Chriſt hath inſtituted; when he ranks them among theſe that juſtle Chriſt out of his place, as he on whoſe ſhoulders the government of the church is laid: for if theſe potentates he may mean did otherwiſe, they would then ſtand in his place, and take his government upon their ſhoulders, and rule the fear, or worſhip and ſervice of God, inſtead of him who is the ruler of the fear of God; yea, and bring in their own fear in the room of the fear of God.

By this power of the kings of the earth about theſe national churches, they ſtood adorned with the furniture of the kings of the earth, who alſo ſhielded them in the enjoyment of the privileges that they beſtowed on them, and defended them againſt heretics and ſchiſmatics: whereas Jeſus Chriſt is the ſhield and glory of the true church, that is cloathed with him, and has this world under her feet, and wears the doctrine of his apoſtles as her crown.

And this is alſo another fruit of the connection of the church

church with the kings of the earth, that a church ſo connected with them laboured under difficulties, in keeping up the pretence of her connection with Jeſus Chriſt, in a conſiſtency with her connection with the legiſlative powers of the earth, whereby ſhe was eſtabliſhed. And no wonder if hereupon ſhould enſue two parties in ſuch a church; ſome, as their intereſt led, chuſing to inſiſt on the pretence of her connection with Jeſus Chriſt, unto the weakening of the other connection, and others inſiſting on the real connection with the legiſlative power that eſtabliſhed her, unto the weakening of the other pretended connection; and theſe that are at the helm in church-courts going this laſt way, while others, that cannot get into the management, ſtrive to ſtir up the people the other way. And if they that manage the church ſhould, at any time, inſiſt vehemently on the pretence of connection with Jeſus Chriſt, unto the weakening of the other, it could not miſs to produce ſuch convulſions in the nation, as the contention of a man and wife for the pre-eminence makes in a family. But, however it be, this connection of the church and the kings of the earth makes it ſome way neceſſary for the members of the church, as ſuch, to be politicians as well as Chriſtians, and to be let into the affairs of the ſtate, as well as into the affairs of the kingdom of heaven.

Further, when, by the legiſlative power of the nation, the maintenance of the miniſters of the church is provided for, and their authority over the people of the nation raiſed and ſecured, this muſt, in the nature of the thing, be an allurement to worldly men to ſeek into the miniſtry, that ſeek nothing but their own honour, gain, and eaſe, and to lay out themſelves for it, as men do for any honourable, gainful, and eaſy worldly employment. And whatever profeſſions or ſubſcriptions be required of them, when connected with ſuch temporal advantages, theſe will be complied with by multitudes that have nothing but theſe advantages in view.

When there are ſeveral candidates for the overſight of a pariſh, and contending parties, there is a neceſſity for ſome ſtanding rule to go by, to avoid utter confuſion; and this rule muſt be conſiſtent with the connection betwixt the church and the legiſlative power of the nation, whereby alone that ſet of clergy that poſſeſſes pariſhes has the poſſeſſion of them.

In this caſe, it is not poſſible that this ſtated rule can be agreeable to the rule obſerved by Chriſtians, when there was

no connection between the church and the powers of the earth, and no worldly advantages ſecured unto the miniſters of the goſpel, or connected with the miniſtry of the word, by the legiſlative power of any nation of this world, and no maintenance provided for them by any law but the law of Chriſt that influences only his willing people. And it is eaſy for the party that finds not this rule calculated for them, to raiſe a cry againſt it, as not agreeable to the practice of the firſt Chriſtians, recorded in ſcripture, and therefore diſagreeable to the law of Chriſt. But was there a national church and a national covenant, and the coercive power of the magiſtrate about the church, cutting off heretics, and giving no toleration to any but the right ſort of Chriſtians; or, was there a national church by law eſtabliſhed among the firſt Chriſtians? And why then do not theſe men cry out on theſe things alſo, as diſagreeable to the kingdom of Chriſt? The anſwer is, Ay, but that was the infancy of the church, when there was no Chriſtian magiſtrate, and ſo no legal eſtabliſhment. And this anſwer will ſerve in the other caſe alſo: ſo that, if our worldly honour, gain, and eaſe, will not ſuffer us to be conformed to that infancy of the church in theſe things, why will we be conformed to that infancy in this thing, that behoved to alter with the other alterations, and as a conſequent of them? But even then, when it is ſaid, the church was in infancy, they that contributed to the maintenance of the paſtors choſed them; church-members choſed them: ſo that the alteration is at leaſt no greater here than it is in the other things. To tell a man, in thoſe days, that he would be obliged to maintain the teacher, though he had no liberty to chuſe his own teacher, would have been then an odd ſtory. And yet we have not heard any outcry or ſcruple at taking ſtipend from a diſaffected heritor, or raiſing an augmentation from his eſtate by law; though the ground of ſcruple, in this caſe, be the ſame as in the other.

As to the liberty of the Chriſtian people, it cannot be ſaid to be more taken away by this act of aſſembly, than it has been by all the acts and methods of doing about ſettling pariſhes that have been in Scotland: for the majority of heads of families deſtroyed the liberty of the minority, and the greater part of all ſocieties is not always the beſt, the head of a family repreſenting the family, and yet at laſt differing from them in his choice, deſtroyed the liberty of the perſons in his family capable to chuſe, and perhaps better Chriſtians than himſelf; and lay-elders repreſenting the people may do

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the ſame. And if a maſter of a family may thus repreſent his ſervant, a better Chriſtian than himſelf, what is the difference, as far as Chriſt's law is concerned, betwixt this and a landlord's repreſenting his tenant? So that unleſs it be reduced to the old conſent of the whole church, (without the lording of any one church-member over another, either as to the receiving or rejecting of a miniſter), when there was no connection between the church and the kings of the earth, and every Chriſtian profeſſed ſubjection to Chriſt in ſupporting his paſtor, it is no great matter which way men be put in pariſhes, and in poſſeſſion of the benefice afforded by law, providing it be ſtill in the greateſt agreeableneſs to the legiſlative power of the nation, and to the connection between that and the national church.

But the ancient Chriſtian liberty remains entire, notwithſtanding patronage, as it now ſtands, and the preſent act of aſſembly: for while they provide teachers for people that would neither chuſe nor maintain them, if left to themſelves, there is nothing in theſe acts, under the preſent government, that offers violence to no man's conſcience, to hinder any that are not ſatisfied with the public teachers to chuſe their own teachers, and contribute to their maintenance, as they chuſe their own phyſicians. But it is far eaſier for the people to make grievous complaints of the want of liberty to chuſe teachers, whoſe maintenance is otherwiſe provided for, without any foundation in the ſcriptures, than to chuſe them, and be at the charge of maintaining them according to the ſcriptures. And it is eaſier for miniſters to be popular, by contending for the liberty of the people, while they enjoy the public maintenance, than to leave their worldly advantages, to ſerve the Chriſtian people in the miniſtry, and live as they are capable to enable them, and on the providence of the head over all things to the church. Though yet, if none of theſe that are bred for the legal maintenance will deny themſelves, and ſerve them in the miniſtry of the word, it is ſtill agreeable to Mr Erſkine's ſermon, that they ſhould chuſe from among themſelves, men not educated for the ſtipends that the law provides, but knowing more of God, and of the things of God, than even the builders that reckon them among the accurſed mob. And theſe may be as eaſily maintained as the firſt Chriſtian elders, before whom Paul ſet himſelf, at the ſame time, as an example of great labour in the miniſtry, and of labour with his hands: and if his example be to be followed by elders, or miniſters of the word,

to the end of the world, in the firſt, why not in the laſt? ſeeing he commends it to elders, and calls them to follow it as well as the other. Thus the people may have their liberty, if they were delivered from that carnal notion of Chriſt's kingdom, that has no more real ground in the Old-Teſtament propheſies, than the notion of the Jewiſh builders. This, and no preſent act of parliament or aſſembly, holds them in bondage; and till they be delivered from it, complain as they will, they will never have true liberty to ſerve Chriſt according to the New Teſtament, and follow the footſteps of his flock ſet before them there. If Mr Erſkine would be ſo good to them as tell them this, it might perhaps get a better hearing from them: but it is ſtill better they hear the truth from any body, than not all.

The

The Right of the CHRISTIAN PEOPLE, and the Power of their PASTORS, in the ORDINATION of Miniſters of the Goſpel, aſſerted. With ſome Directions for REFORMATION.

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IF one would know the truth in any point touching religion that is in controverſy between parties contending for the pre-eminence in this world, the keenneſs of each faction muſt be far from him, and the leſs concern he has in the temporal intereſts of either ſide, he is the more fit to judge of the ſtrength of their arguments, ſo far as theſe are able to inſtruct him in things that have a reference to eternity. In the heat of contention, every party ſnatches the readieſt weapon for ſelf-defence, or for the hurt of the adverſary. And in this caſe ſomething of the truth may be found on both ſides, but mixed with a deal of falſehood; and in that field of battle it appears not like itſelf; it drudges there to the ambition, avarice, or fleſhly eaſe of a ſet of men, and ſerves to promote the temporal intereſt of one faction upon the ruin of another; and is ready to be treated by either ſide according to the appearance it makes againſt their intereſt. Yet truth, where-ever it appears, demands regard; and it is not the leaſt part of the duty we owe it, to contribute to our power to deliver it from the ſlavery it is put to by them that want only to ſerve themſelves of it.

Would it not move the indignation of any man that indeed believes the holy ſcriptures to be the words of eternal life, the words of God's grace, that teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to look for that bleſſed hope, to ſee theſe ſcriptures wreſted by all parties of men, contending for worldly pre-eminence in one ſhape or other, to anſwer their deſigns, and ſerve them in their malice and guile, hypocriſies, envies, and evil ſpeakings againſt one another? In oppoſition to this, it becomes us to ſtudy the exhortation given us by the Apoſtle Peter, when he tells us, "That all "fleſh is graſs, but the word of the Lord endureth for "ever," and calls us to lay aſide all malice and guile, and, as new-born babes, to deſire the ſincere milk of the word,

word, that we may grow thereby, if ſo be we have taſted that the Lord is gracious.

There is no controverſy more famous among us at this time than that concerning the right of the Chriſtian people to elect their paſtors, and the power of the paſtors in that matter.

The people's right was not long ago debated with no ſmall heat among the Epiſcopal diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed church; and theſe of them that found their intereſt in it pleaded moſt zealouſly for it, with all the criticiſms on συγκαταψηφίζομαι and χειροτονέω, and all the quotations of the ancients that their reading could furniſh them with; for all ſorts of clergymen will ſtand up for the rights and liberties of the people, when they find this neceſſary to raiſe themſelves; though, aſide from that, it will take a power of grace to make a clergyman a hearty friend to the liberty of the Chriſtian people. After much contention among theſe clergyman, they at length ſaw their intereſt lay in coming together, and ſuch union of the clergy is not the moſt friendly thing in the world to the liberty of the laity. But we are now again amuſed with a very hot debate in the eſtabliſhed church on the ſame ſubject. And one would think there muſt be ſomething in this right of the people, when no ſort of church-rulers are aſhamed to have recourſe to it on proper occaſions; yea, they can glory in patronizing it, though, at the ſame time, it muſt be owned there is a principle (not very Chriſtian) in the people, that inclines them to give good heed to thoſe teachers that zealouſly proclaim their right, and make the loudeſt complaints to them of their ſuperiors as incroaching upon it. And this contention in the church is not very unlike the ſtrange buſtle and confuſion in the ſtate about the exciſe-bill. Yet, becauſe it pretends an intereſt in the ſcriptures, and a concern in religion, it demands the attention of them that believe the ſcriptures, and would not deſire to be utter ſtrangers to any thing that pertains to true religion, let the intereſts of the differing parties be what they will. For whether this debate iſſue in their ſeparation from one another, or their coming together on ſome general terms of agreement, (in both which caſes we may ſuppoſe, from what has hitherto appeared, the clergy will ſee to themſelves); yet the truth is the truth ſtill; and ſomething ought to be ſaid for their ſakes who may be honeſtly inquiring after it, let the number be never ſo ſmall. For however whimſical they may appear that ſeek the truth without any worldly deſign, but with

with a reſpect to the world to come, no man's labour is ill beſtowed in contributing to their ſatisfaction.

The queſtion about the call to the miniſtry of the goſpel or word of faith ſuppoſes the truth of that goſpel; and they that are ſo unhappy as to diſbelieve it, cannot plead any concern in the queſtion. They can go no further than this, that every man has a right to inſtruct his neighbour in every thing that is good for him to know, as far as he is able, and as is conſiſtent with the good of the body-politic wherein they enjoy privileges together; and ſo it muſt be in the power of that body, to take care that it ſuffer no damage by any pretended exerciſe of this right among the members. But as to the church or kingdom of Chriſt, his officers, and the whole order of that ſociety, they have nothing to do about it, except it be to ſhew their greateſt diſlike and contempt of whatſoever appears moſt agreeable to the goſpel; though, after all, it cannot be reckoned exceeding diſcreet in them thus far to meddle with other mens matters, whereof they are not the moſt fit to judge. They are indeed ſometimes called upon and appealed to by both parties in this and other queſtions about the Chriſtian inſtitution, when they plead reaſon and nature's light againſt one another, where they have leaſt to ſay from the ſcriptures; but this is their folly and weakneſs to inquire at the light of nature what a poſitive inſtitution ſhould be.

It is not a ſign of the greateſt regard to the goſpel, in them that profeſs to believe it, to ſpeak as if what the New Teſtament ſays of the miniſtry of the word and ſuch things ſerved only for that age wherein it was committed to writing. For if this were the caſe, why had we any thing but the eſſentials written to us in that book? And why do we obſerve and admire the divine providence in the preſervation of that book, in a ſociety that corrupted the whole of Chriſtianity, and in the bringing of it again forth to the view of the nations in their own languages, as his teſtimony againſt all the corruptions of that ſame ſociety? And may not theſe of that Roman church as well alledge, that the New Teſtament ſerved indeed for the time wherein it was written; but as for after-ages, it belonged to them to adapt Chriſtianity to theſe, as the New Teſtament was ſuited to that age? However, it is manifeſt, they ſpeak lies in hypocriſy who make inſinuations this way, to the diſcredit of the only rule of Chriſtianity, and yet pretend, that the New Teſtament, and the practice of the

the firſt Chriſtians recorded there, is the rule of their conſciences as to this matter of the people's right.

That the writings of the Old Teſtament and the New contain a complete revelation of the will of God to men cannot be denied without the higheſt reflection on the truth of that revelation, that plainly ſets itſelf out as a declaration of the whole counſel of God, to which nothing can be added. The Old Teſtament plainly promiſed, in its concluſion, a further revelation, and the New Teſtament declares itſelf to be that revelation, while it concludes with a curſe on them that add to it, as well as on them that take from it. If therefore the New Teſtament ſay nothing on this queſtion about New-Teſtament miniſters, that depends entirely on the goſpel, no man can ſay any thing of it that can be ſubmitted to as a divine inſtitution, unleſs it could be proved that the New Teſtament has lodged a power in any man, or ſociety of men, to ſay in this matter what they think fit, or to act in it as they pleaſe; and till this be done, which in all appearance will never be, we muſt reſt ourſelves content with what the ſcriptures ſay, and examine every thing that men tell us by that.

And, ſeeing the holy ſcriptures contain a complete revelation of the will of God to men, no man can now pretend to be ſo called of God to the miniſtry of the word as the inſpired men, whom he choſe to give out that revelation, and to whoſe miſſion he bore witneſs in an extraordinary manner. But what theſe men were to them that had the divine oracles from their mouths, that their writings are to us, as our Lord ſaid of the writings of Moſes and the prophets; "they have Moſes and the prophets, let them hear them; "and if they will not believe Moſes and the prophets, neither will they be perſuaded though one roſe from the "dead."

The queſtion then is, How the holy ſcriptures declare that men are called to the office of feeding Chriſt's people by his word fully contained in theſe ſcriptures? For if the whole counſel of God be declared in them, and the miniſtry of the word of revelation depend wholly on that revelation, no man can lawfully pretend a call from God to give out the leaſt addition to that revelation; and as little can any pretend to be called of God to the miniſtry of the word already contained in the ſcriptures, but according to theſe ſcriptures; and every man that is called according to them has his call.

The New-Teſtament law ſpeaks not ſo clearly of any thing, touching

touching that miniſtry of the goſpel which the apoſtles left behind them on the earth, as of the characters of them that ſhould exerciſe this office, which are expreſs in the epiſtles to Timothy and Titus, and of the manner wherein they ought to exerciſe it, as is to be ſeen in Paul's diſcourſe to the Epheſian elders, in Peter's exhortation to elders, and in our Lord's commiſſion to miniſters, with whom he promiſes to be preſent to the end of the world.

It was moſt neceſſary, that the Chriſtian law ſhould be expreſs on the characters of the perſons that ſhould exerciſe this ſacred office, ſeeing it is not confined to any fleſhly ſeed or particular family, as was the prieſthood under the Old Teſtament. And if we may not be as certain whom we are to receive as miniſters of the word, by the deſcription that the Chriſtian law gives of the perſons, as the church of the Jews might be of the deſcent of their prieſts from Aaron, we are at a conſiderable loſs beyond them; eſpecially when the New Teſtament requires ſuch duties to be done to them, as cannot be done unleſs we know them, and contains ſuch threatenings to them that reject them, and ſuch promiſes to them that give them ſuitable reception, as muſt make every true Chriſtian anxious to know who they are; and for what end are theſe characters ſo expreſs and particular, if it be not, that we may by them know who are called of God to that office, and who not? And can it then be ſaid, without a reflection on the Chriſtian law, that this end cannot be reached by it? or, that we cannot thereby have as great certainty as the nature of the thing requires, concerning them whom we are bound to receive as miniſters of the goſpel? If the rule of the New Teſtament were in all things followed, there could be no difficulty in this matter. For no new convert could enter upon the exerciſe of this office, till he was well known in the Chriſtian ſociety whereof he was a member, and wherewith he aſſembled, and daily converſed, and which compared him with the deſcription given of a miniſter of the word by the apoſtles and evangeliſts; and this deſcription was the ſame that is now written to us in the New Teſtament. In ſuch a ſociety did a man then enter upon the exerciſe of this office, having the apoſtolic deſcription of a miniſter applied to him by a people profeſſing ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt, in ſubmitting to the overſight of an elder or biſhop called by him to that office. The caſe of Apollos was a little extraordinary. He had been a teacher among John's diſciples, and was privately inſtructed by Aquila and Priſcilla,

who were well known to the church in Corinth; and they, upon intimate acquaintance with him at Epheſus, where there was yet no church, recommended him to the church in Corinth, where he firſt exerciſed the office of a miniſter of the goſpel. However, even in this caſe, the church where he began his miniſtry had enough of certainty about his character.

It is not in the power of any to add to or diminiſh from the deſcription given of a miniſter of the goſpel in the New Teſtament, ſo as to inſiſt on any qualification as needful that is not mentioned there, or to make any qualification there ſpoke of needleſs. Neither has Jeſus Chriſt, the lawgiver, given to any miniſters or people any power or right whatſoever, to call, ſend, elect, or ordain any perſon to that office, who is not qualified according to the deſcription given in his law; as he has not given any power or right to reject the leaſt of them that are qualified according to that law. Let a man have hands laid on him by men that could prove an uninterrupted deſcent of impoſition of hands to him from the apoſtles, let him be ſet apart to that office by a company of miniſters the moſt conformable themſelves to the ſcripture-character of miniſters, and let him be choſen by the moſt holy people on earth; if yet he do not anſwer the New-Teſtament deſcription of a miniſter (which is poſſible, if the ſcripture be not the rule of their judgment in this particular caſe), he is not called of God to that office, and is indeed no miniſter of Chriſt, but runs unſent. And if this be the caſe, they boaſt in vain of any manner of election and ordination, who ſtudy not conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter in the exerciſe of that office. For no manner of ordination of ordinary miniſters can pretend ſuch a clear foundation in the New Teſtament, as the deſcription of the perſons that ſhould be miniſters. And they that do indeed ſtudy conformity to that deſcription, can ſecurely hear their miniſtry called in queſtion, and rejected by all ſorts of men, on grounds whereof the Chriſtian law makes no mention: yea, their miniſtry cannot be rejected, without diſobedience to Jeſus Chriſt.

Thus, whoever is conformable to that deſcription the Chriſtian law gives of a miniſter of the word, has all the call and miſſion that the Lord gives any man to that office; and whoever wants that, whatever he have, has not God's call.

The only part, therefore, that any ſort of men can claim in this matter is that of obedience to the Chriſtian law.

Miniſters,

Miniſters, elders, or biſhops, in this, as in all other things wherein they preſide among the Chriſtian people, are to teach them to obſerve what Chriſt has commanded them, and to go before them as their leaders, by doctrine and example, in the way of faith and obedience to the word of Chriſt contained in the ſcriptures. They have no power to ſeparate any man to that office whom God has not called. His law gives them only the power of obedience, in ſeparating the men who are called by him, according to his word: and in this they are not lords over his heritage, but enſamples to the flock which is among them, of obedience to their only Lord.

No people have right to elect any whom God has not called, or to reject thoſe whom he calls; but they muſt obey him, in receiving and doing all that he requires of them in his word toward them that are by him qualified according to the deſcription given in his law. If they be not capable to diſcern, by that deſcription, who are called of God to the miniſtry of the word, they are not capable to give obedience to the Chriſtian law on that head. The only part of the character as to which they are ſuppoſed incapable to judge, is that of aptneſs to teach, or holding faſt the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by ſound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainſayers. If paſtors be to judge of this by their ſkill in the wiſdom of words, or the wiſdom of the ſcribe and diſputer of this world, which cannot be brought down to the capacity of the Chriſtian people, how can they perſuade the people, that any man is called of God to the miniſtry of the word? Or, how can the people perceive, that their paſtors are leading them in the way of obedience to Chriſt, in ſeparating a man to that office whom they cannot know that Chriſt has called? In this caſe it is impoſſible for them to profeſs obedience to Jeſus Chriſt, in receiving one of his miniſters according to his law: they muſt inevitably give a blind obedience to their paſtors inſtead of Chriſt, if theſe paſtors do not inſtruct them in that wiſdom of words, ſo far as to enable them to perceive that a man is thereby apt to teach. But the New Teſtament makes the wideſt diſtinction betwixt that wiſdom of words, and the faithful word, which he that is ſeparated to the miniſtry of the goſpel muſt be holding faſt, that he may be able both to exhort in ſound teaching, and to convince the gainſayers; ſo that a man may be very learned in the one, and very unlearned in the other. And ſince the Chriſtian law plainly ſets aſide this wiſdom of the ſcribe and diſputer of this world, as

being no part of the deſcription it gives us of a miniſter of the word of faith, neither paſtors nor people have any more to judge of on this head, but the ſoundneſs of the doctrine, and aptneſs to communicate it to others for their inſtruction, conviction, and comfort. If the people may err, and be miſtaken as to this, ſo may miniſters: and what error is there among the people, that has not been maintained by miniſters? But ſtill, if they be not able to know this in any meaſure, they are in no meaſure capable to obey Jeſus Chriſt, in receiving and ſubmitting themſelves to the overſight of his miniſters.

The people cannot take impreſſions made on them by the doctrine, for their rule of judging in this caſe: for there are wrong as well as right impreſſions, and theſe muſt be judged of by the ſcriptures, and the faithful word contained in them. There are various impreſſions, according to the variety of the ſituations of the people, yea, and oft times according to their humours: ſo that it is ſcarce poſſible they can agree in judging by this rule, as they can in perceiving that a man brings ſound doctrine to them: and if the faith once delivered to the ſaints be preached to them, whoſe fault is it that they are not edified? Yea, and if they were to judge by impreſſions in this matter, they might come to reject that part of the ſcripture-doctrine that they did not find impreſſed on them, as well as the miniſter that holds faſt the faithful word; at leaſt this could not miſs to produce the ſame thing that the Apoſtle condemns in the Corinthians, that went into parties and factions on their experiences, by means of different preachers of the ſame doctrine.

A people cannot pretend to be obeying Chriſt in this thing, who are not ſhewing a regard to all his commands, nor living in ſubjection to the diſcipline expreſsly inſtituted in the ſcriptures. Zeal for the good work of obedience to one of his laws, while there is no reſpect ſhewed to other as plain laws of his, is utterly inconſiſtent with the ſcripture-character of a Chriſtian people. And how can a people pretend a regard to the word of God, in contending for their right of election, who ſhew not the ſame zeal for as clear a right of theirs, even the profeſſion of ſubjection to Chriſt, in contributing of their ſubſtance for the maintenance of their paſtors, that ſo they who preach the goſpel may live of the goſpel, as they that miniſtered about holy things eated of the temple, and they that waited at the altar partaked with the altar? Why do they ſuffer this right to be wrung out of their hands, and

yield

yield it up peaceably to any that pleaſe to take it from them, while they are ſo jealous of the leaſt incroachment on the other right?

And as no people can pretend to be obeying Chriſt in this matter, but they who are ſtudying an univerſal conformity to the deſcription of a Chriſtian people in the New Teſtament, ſo no miniſters of the goſpel can act in it as paſtors, but among a flock hearing the voice of the chief ſhepherd Jeſus Chriſt. Their commiſſion beyond that is only to preach the goſpel to every creature: neither can they pretend to be the repreſentatives of the people in the part that the Chriſtian law calls them to act here; and as little can any part of the people repreſent another in their obedience to Chriſt, as to which every one of them muſt give an account of himſelf to God. And why may not the people be as well repreſented in all the other parts of their obedience to the laws of Jeſus Chriſt?

When a people ſtudying conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian people, ſhall happen to want paſtors, and have the Chriſtian law, this want cannot render them incapable of obeying that law, in receiving and ſubmitting to any as their miniſters that are evidently qualified according to that law. For they have the apoſtles; and though they want elders, they ſhould hear them, and ſo have elders.

The turning of the part that men have to act in the ordination of miniſters, out of the channel of humble obedience to the plain word of God, has been the ſpring of all the confuſion and diſorder that has taken place in the world about the ordination of miniſters. When the wiſdom of man made bold to make the leaſt alteration in one point of the divine inſtitution, it was for this end, to recommend Chriſtianity more to the world: and this end was ſteadily purſued by the covetouſneſs and ambition of the clergy, and the carnal zeal of the people for the worldly honour of Chriſtianity, and their own eaſe, till it became a worldly religion. One alteration in this point, as well as on other heads, made way for another to ſupport that, and ſo on, till the world was filled with uſages, regulations, conſtitutions, and laws, which came to be more attended to than the word of God, that was in effect made void by the keeping of theſe. And while ſuch wiſe regulations came in, upon pretence of unity, order, and decency, but ſerved mainly to the worldly exaltation of the clergy, and carnal eaſe of the people, they have

filled

filled the world with ſuch envying and ſtrife, ſuch wars and fightings, as could never have happened to them that contented themſelves with the ſcripture-rule. Yea, theſe regulations have plainly appeared at length to be proper engines of war to parties contending for the pre-eminence in this world. And therefore, if men be in earneſt to reform in this matter, they muſt lay aſide every invention of human wiſdom, and give over proudly contending for a right that clergymen, who cannot prevail in ruling the church, are perſuading the people that they have, and their ſuperiors are taking from them; even as the mob is enraged continually againſt the government in the ſtate by them that cannot prevail at court; and they muſt return to the old courſe of humble ſubjection and obedience to the plain word of God, the word of eternal life, without adding thereto, or diminiſhing from it. "And this is the right of the Chriſtian "people, and the power of their paſtors."

While the confuſion remains that has flowed from a falling away from the ſcripture-rule, and has come, by mens pretending to be maſters, inſtead of obedient ſervants to the Lord Chriſt, we ought not to deny their miniſtry, who, in any tolerable meaſure, anſwer the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter; nor need we be afraid to diſown the miniſtry of any ſort of men, of the greateſt name, who do not, in any tolerable meaſure, bear a conformity to that deſcription. This is a far ſurer footing to go upon, than that of the manner wherein a man comes into the poſſeſſion of the ſtipend in a pariſh, and becomes the public teacher there. It cannot be told, where the New Teſtament ſpeaks ſo clearly of pariſh-miniſters, and of ſtipends provided by law, and of elders not apt to teach ruling the people, and repreſenting them in the election of a pariſh-miniſter, or of the majority of heads of families or communicants chuſing a miniſter to all the reſt of the pariſh, and to the ſtipend, as it ſpeaks of the characters of a miniſter of the goſpel, and calls us to receive ſuch. Neither can it be ſo well told, where the New Teſtament ſays, that it is my election that makes a man my miniſter, as where it forbids me to reject a miniſter of Chriſt, and obliges me to receive a man becauſe he is one, according to the deſcription of a miniſter in the Chriſtian law.

But if men will not thus live at eaſe, in a diſorderly corrupted ſtate of things, and want to ſee a true reformation, then let them ſeriouſly deliberate on the following propoſals.

1. Let

1. Let the holy ſcriptures be attended to, and held faſt, in oppoſition to every other rule that men walk by; as, the imaginations of their own hearts, the courſe of this world, the traditions of the fathers, and commandments of men, and ſeducing ſpirits, ſpeaking beſide the ſcriptures, ſpeaking of the world, and denying directly or indirectly that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh. This is what Paul recommends to Timothy as a preſervative againſt the perilous times in the laſt days, 2 Tim. iii. He ſets before him the things he had learned of him, his doctrine and manner of life, now written to us in the New Teſtament, and this, with the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, which, he ſays, Timothy had known from a child, he points out to him as ſufficient to manifeſt the folly of them that reſiſt the truth, and to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. And, by what he there ſays, their folly may be manifeſt, who, for the ſake of other rules that they would have us to walk by, reflect on the holy ſcriptures, as dark and of doubtful interpretation, as the common reſort of heretics, and as fitted only to the firſt times of Chriſtianity; and not proper for the times we live in. And yet by ſuch like inſinuations as theſe, from men profeſſing that the ſcriptures are the only rule of Chriſtianity, are poor people frighted from ſearching the ſcriptures, and cleaving cloſs to them in their practice, leſt they ſhould fall under deluſion, againſt which the ſcriptures are not, it ſeems to them, ſo proper a preſervative as other rules that they are called to walk by. The Apoſtle, forewarning the Theſſalonians of the man of ſin, and of the ſtrong deluſion that God was to ſend on profeſſors of Chriſtianity that received not the love of the truth, gives them this direction againſt the beginnings of this evil, "ſtand "faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, "whether by word or our epiſtle," 2 Theſſ. ii. Theſe traditions which he calls them to hold, were partly written in his epiſtle, and partly delivered to them by word of mouth: for the New-Teſtament ſcripture was not then completed; but they had the whole counſel of God declared to them by the Apoſtle, which is now ſo fully declared in the writings of the New Teſtament, whereof the epiſtle to the Theſſalonians is a part, as nothing can be added to it. If therefore we would eſcape the corruption of Chriſtianity that was then beginning to work, and the ſtrong deluſion there foretold, we muſt firmly hold the things delivered to us in the New Teſtament, without adding to them or taking from them. We muſt not

not ſatisfy ourſelves with an idle confeſſion, that the New Teſtament is the word of God, but we muſt hold faſt by it, as our only rule, in oppoſition to all other rules that have been added to it, or come in the place of it; we muſt hold faſt the things delivered there, in our practice, without turning to the right hand or to the left. And in order to this, let us hearken to the advice the Apoſtle gives to the church in Rome, which, if it had been always attended to, might have prevented all the abominations of that worldly kingdom, at the head of which that church came to be in after ages. He ſays, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye tranſ-"formed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. Let them that are miniſters ſearch the ſcriptures diligently, and with a ſingle eye, clear of worldly reſpects, and however much they know of them, let them yet be perſuaded, they are able to make them wiſer, and let them ſtill be diſciples of Chriſt, depending on him, as little children, for inſtruction from him, by opening their underſtanding to underſtand the ſcriptures. And let them not ſhun, for the fear of the people, or for any hope in this world, to ſpeak all the words of eternal life, and to declare the whole counſel of God keeping nothing back; knowing this, that the word is not committed to them to give it out as they pleaſe; and that now, ſince the revelation is finiſhed, there is no part of it but what is profitable for making the man of God perfect, or thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. They muſt not only take care of handling the word of God deceitfully, and ſtudy to teach Chriſt's diſciples to obſerve all he has commanded, but they muſt alſo go before them, as enſamples of holding faſt the things delivered in the ſcriptures, in a diligent obſervation of them, the leaſt of them not excepted. "For he that ſhall "break one of theſe leaſt commandments, and ſhall teach "men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of hea-"ven." And let the Chriſtian people alſo to their power, ſearch the ſcriptures, and examine every part of the doctrine of their miniſters, and their example by the ſcriptures, comparing ſcripture with ſcripture, that they may be followers of them only, as they can ſee them following Chriſt; and ſo profeſs ſubjection to the goſpel of Chriſt in following them. Let them bring all their former thoughts and opinions in matters of religion to the ſtandard of the ſcriptures, ready to give up with every principle and practice that has no foundation there, and to take up with every doctrine and practice

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that ſhall be found there, and without delay to obſerve all things whatſoever Chriſt is found requiring there, however little they have been obſerved before. Even as the captive Jews, returning from typical Babylon, reformed themſelves by the written law, which, through the good providence of God, remained among them, notwithſtanding the captivity, and all the corruptions that had prevailed among them, and after they no more enjoyed many of the glorious things that attended the firſt giving out of that Old-Teſtament revelation. The Lord encourages them under their wants with this, that they had his word and his ſpirit remaining among them; and they diligently read that word, and what they found written there, they forthwith practiſed, though ſome of theſe practices had not been in uſe from the days of Joſhua the ſon of Nun. Though we cannot now pretend to many things, that accompanied the giving out of the New-Teſtament revelation, and behoved to ceaſe when it was completed, as the Apoſtle expreſsly declares they ſhould ceaſe, 1 Cor. xiii.; yet, by the wonderful providence of God, we have the writings of the prophets and the apoſtles of Chriſt preſerved, and brought into our own language, ſo as all have acceſs to know them: and in this caſe, is not the practice of the returning reforming Jews written for our learning, that we may take them as our example in this thing? Let us therefore, as they did, give attendance to the reading of the ſcriptures, to exhortation and to doctrine, that we may be by them furniſhed unto every good work, and hold faſt the things written there, ſo as not to let them go, or add any thing to them, in confeſſion or practice, for any hope or for any fear wherewith we can be moved.

2. Let the deſcription that the New Teſtament gives of a Chriſtian, as well as of a miniſter, be carefully obſerved; ſo as all they, and none elſe, may be acknowledged as Chriſtians, who are in ſome meaſure conformable to that deſcription. Our obedience to Jeſus Chriſt depends, at leaſt, as much on the knowledge of this, as on our acquaintance with the ſcripture-character of a miniſter; and as great evils have followed upon a departure from the rule of the New Teſtament on this head as on the other. It is impoſſible for us to ſearch mens hearts, and to know who is a true Chriſtian in the ſight of God, ſo as to diſtinguiſh him from one that is a hypocrite only in his ſight. But there are ſuch peculiar duties required of us towards the children of God, and the brethren of Jeſus Chriſt, on account of their relation to him, with ſuch

promiſes and threatenings annexed, that we had been in the greateſt difficulty about our obedience to Jeſus Chriſt, if his law had not alſo deſcribed to us the perſons to whom it obliged us to do theſe duties. Shall we think that the Chriſtian law hath made our peculiar eſteem and regard to a people whom we cannot know, to be the grand evidence of our love to Chriſt himſelf, and of our intereſt in him? Or are we to ſtand or fall at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and is it to fare with us eternally according to our behaviour to a peculiar people whom we cannot by any rule diſtinguiſh from other people?

The New Teſtament leaves us not at this uncertainty; but gives ſuch a deſcription of theſe whom we are to look on as the brethren of Chriſt, as will ſerve to convince Chriſt's enemies at his appearing, of their neglect and hatred of him, by their neglect and hatred of the leaſt of theſe his brethren whom they ſaw in this world, and as will ſerve, on the other hand, to manifeſt his peoples love to himſelf by their deeds of love to one another while they lived together in the world. The deſcription given in the New Teſtament of theſe to whom we are to behave as the children of God, and brethren of Chriſt, is ſo clear, as to leave us at as little uncertainty as the Jews and the nations their neighbours could be in, as to them that were of the ſeed of the Jews. We may take theſe few texts for inſtances on this ſubject, which is one way or other touched on throughout the New Teſtament, Matth. xi. 48. 49. 50. 1 John iii. 23. Matth. vii. 21. 22. 23. Heb. vi. 9. 10. Matth. xviii. 3. 5. 6. & x. 36. 37. 38. Luke xiv. 27. John xiii. 34. 35. Rev. xii. 17. 1 Theſſ. i.

The extraordinary ſigns that appeared about Chriſt's diſciples at the erection of his kingdom, and whereby the Lord bare witneſs to the firſt-fruits of the Gentiles, when he viſited the nations, to "take out of them a people for his "name," are now ceaſed, becauſe there is no more uſe for them; but that "work of faith," that "labour of love," and that "patience of hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," that was the product of the goſpel in the firſt Chriſtians, muſt remain as long as Chriſtianity remains in the world. And as the diſtinguiſhing character of a Chriſtian was made up of theſe three from the beginning, ſo it muſt be ſtill to the end of the world. "For," ſays the Apoſtle, "whether prophe-"cies, they ſhall fail, whether tongues, they ſhall ceaſe, "whether knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away. And now abi-"deth faith, hope, charity, theſe three; but the greateſt

"of

" of theſe is charity," 1 Cor. xiii. And therefore where the work of faith appears not, nor the patience of hope, but eſpecially where there is no appearance of charity, in that labour of love ſhewed towards his name, in miniſtring to the ſaints, as he requires in his word, there, let men think what they will, there is no appearance of Chriſtianity.

We are not to take the deſcription of the children of God from our own fancy: For through our ſelf-liking, we are ready to fancy, that likeſt to God that is likeſt ourſelves; nor are we to take the deſcription of a child of God from the eſteem and approbation of the world, as if theſe who are highly eſteemed among men for holineſs, were ſo likewiſe in the ſight of God; for by that rule the Phariſees, who were " an abomination in the ſight of God," would have been his children, and his ſon a Samaritan, having a devil: but let us take the deſcription of a Chriſtian, with whom we are to behave as with the brother of Jeſus Chriſt, only from his own word in the New Teſtament. Let all our notions of a Chriſtian's character be examined and corrected by that infallible rule. Let the greateſt names of men that " could " ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels," if yet they be not conformable to that deſcription, fall in our eſteem before that rule. And let the leaſt of Chriſt's brethren be acknowledged by us according to that rule, though the " baſe, weak, " and fooliſh things of the world," and though they ſhould be " hungry and thirſty, naked, ſtrangers, and in priſon," or whatever their circumſtances be in this world, and however they be diſpiſed among men.

There is the more need for cleaving ſtrictly to the ſcripture-deſcription of a confeſſor of the name of Chriſt, that the New Teſtament foretels a falſe profeſſion of Chriſtianity coming in place of the true one, and ſetting it aſide: for Paul, forewarning Timothy of the " perilous times to come in the " laſt days," points out the danger of theſe times in deſcribing the people that ſhould then have " a form of godlineſs, " denying the power of it;" and, as a guard to us againſt the peril of theſe times, he gives this charge,—" From ſuch " turn away," 2 Tim. iii. By this new form of godlineſs, or of Chriſtianity, ſuited to the people there deſcribed, the " outer court of the Lord's houſe" came " to be trodden un- " der foot of the nations," and " the man of ſin" roſe to his ſeat in " the temple of God," and " the power of the " people," whom God " took out of the nations for his " name," was ſcattered, when, by this " form of godlineſs,"

they came to be "mingled again with the people of theſe a-"bominations;" and ſo that took place which was pointed at in the prophecy of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiii. 17. 18 19.

The Apoſtle likewiſe gives Timothy a ſample of theſe, that, in the laſt days, ſhould have the form of godlineſs denying its power, in them who, at that time, under the name of *Chriſtians*, went about craftily among the diſciples to ſubvert the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and prevailed on them that had not attained to that knowledge of the truth, whereby they might be delivered from the dominion of their luſts; and therefore wanted a profeſſion of Chriſtianity under which they might have ſome more eaſe in the fulfilment of them. And theſe were, on the one hand, the Judaizers, largely deſcribed in the epiſtles of Paul; and, on the other hand, they that were confident of their juſtification, by a knowledge and a faith that they ſaid they had, which did not ſhew itſelf in works of obedience to the goſpel; for they came to know their juſtification a ſhorter way, as we ſee in the epiſtle of James, and in Jude, and the ſecond epiſtle of Peter.

The Apoſtle compares them whom he thus ſhews to Timothy to the Egyptian magicians, in their oppoſition to the word of God to keep his people in bondage whom he made free to ſerve him. And thereby he inſinuates, that, as the true Chriſtian profeſſion was at firſt eſtabliſhed in the world by ſigns, ſo that other form of godlineſs ſhould have ſigns on its ſide alſo, whereby men would harden themſelves in cleaving to it, in oppoſition to the true profeſſion of Chriſtianity deſcribed in the ſcriptures, to which God bare witneſs by all the ſigns recorded there. But he ſays theſe men ſhall not proceed the full length, even as theſe Egyptians, though they held pace with Moſes ſo far, did not go the full, and were obliged to own themſelves outdone by the finger of God. So none of the men that ever gloried in any ſigns that they imagined to be wrought in favours of the modern form of Chriſtianity, in any ſhape of it, can ſo much as pretend, that the ſigns they talk of ever proceeded the length of the ſigns whereby God bare witneſs to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity that is deſcribed in the New Teſtament. How ſhall we then turn away from them that "have a form of godlineſs, de-"nying the power of it," as the Apoſtle charges us, but by turning to the Chriſtianity deſcribed in the New Teſtament, and there exemplified to us in the way of the firſt Chriſtians, to which the Lord bare witneſs by ſuch ſigns as no other Chriſtianity in after-ages could ever pretend to?

If

If we would indeed be ſo much as ſcriptural profeſſors of Chriſtianity, let us every one ſeek to be conformed to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian, without cutting or carving upon it, or ſeeking to bring it down to us, but to have ourſelves brought up to it, without adding to it or taking from it. And let as many as are thus minded ſeparate themſelves to the law of God, from theſe that ſhew no ſuch purpoſe of heart, but are willing to reſt in the form of godlineſs, denying the power of it, or denying the ancient work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope, which is the power of godlineſs. And herein alſo we may ſtudy the example of the typical Iſrael, in their reformation when they returned from typical Babylon. They not only refuſed the Samaritans, offering to incorporate with them and build the temple, though that refuſal brought no ſmall trouble upon them, but long after that they found, in reading the law of God, that the ſeed of Iſrael ſhould not be mingled with ſtrangers; and particularly they found it written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite ſhould not come into the congregation of God for ever; and when they had heard the law, they ſeparated from Iſrael all the mixed multitude. They trembled at the words of God, and were not afraid to depart from the practice of their fathers, that had departed from the law of God on that head, though they themſelves had been before following them in that departure: for they ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, and ſtood and confeſſed their ſins, and the iniquities of their fathers. If Chriſtians had trembled as much at the word of God on this head, as they did at ſeparation, when the form of godlineſs without the power of it was taking place, Chriſtianity had never been ſo much corrupted in the profeſſion of it as it has manifeſtly been. And there has not been one true ſtep of reformation from that corruption taken at any time, but by them that were more afraid of the word of God, and ſhunned a departure from it, more than ſeparation or departure from their former courſes, and the courſes of their fathers, or from the fellowſhip of any ſort of men in the world. Let them, therefore, that ſeek to be conformed to the ſcripture-deſcription of a Chriſtian, be ſeparated to the law of their Lord, confeſſing their ſin, and the iniquity of their fathers, in having fellowſhip in that form of godlineſs with them that denied the power of it. And whereas they and their fathers in this nation have been zealous contenders for ſuch a form; and have ſworn to it, and for the ſake of that expreſsly abjured Chriſt's own inſti-

tution,

tution, under an odious name, let them confeſs the iniquity of that alſo; and ſo ſtudy reformation according to the New Teſtament in Chriſt's blood, which can both direct and enable them to all the reformation that God requires of them, and is the only everlaſting covenant that ſhall never be forgotten.

Let them aſſemble themſelves together, in the confeſſion of the faith that is in Chriſt the Son of God the Mediator of that covenant, and in obedience to his law in that covenant, to obſerve all his inſtitutions of worſhip, continuing ſtedfaſt in the doctrine and in the fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, praiſing God, and to obey his new commandment in all the branches of it, and to obſerve all things whatſoever he commands, as they find them written in his law. And while they are thus ſeparated to the law of God, let them be in the diligent uſe of every mean there preſcribed for keeping up the ſtudy of conformity to the ſcripture-character of a Chriſtian among them, as theſe mentioned Matth. xviii. and 1 Cor. v. Heb. iii. 12. 13. & x. 23. 24. 25. & xii. 15. Leſt they again ſwerve from the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, and return to a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it.

And when the Chriſtian people thus ſeparate themſelves to the law of God, let none be acknowledged as miniſters of the word or elders but according to their conformity to the ſcripture-deſcription of a miniſter; even as, among the captives returned from typical Babylon, theſe were put from the prieſthood as profane, whoſe deſcent from Aaron did not appear.

3. Let the connection betwixt Chriſtianity and the croſs, of which Paul ſpeaks to Timothy when forewarning him of the perilous times, be carefully obſerved. When the Apoſtle ſets his doctrine and manner of life, in oppoſition to them that have a form of godlineſs, denying the power of it, he inſiſts on his patience, and ſets forth his ſufferings; and, leſt any ſhould imagine this was peculiar to him, or the time wherein he lived, he ſays, "yea, and all that will live godly "in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution." Men may have the form of godlineſs of which he ſpeaks without perſecution; yea, it was the proper fruit of an endeavour to ſeparate Chriſtianity from the croſs; but live godly in Chriſt Jeſus without the croſs, they cannot. This living godly in Chriſt is not a manner of life utterly hid from the world's view, as they that are gainers by the form of godlineſs without the power of it would

would have its power to lie unobſerved, leſt, being as light ſet on a candleſtick, or as a city on a hill, it ſhould create them diſturbance; and ſo they tell the deluded people pretty tales of this ſort, that it is the beſt way of going to heaven, to go with the ſound of their feet unheard. But the godly living that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, is a manner of life that provokes the hatred of the ungodly, and brings on perſecution from the world.

It is true, the firſt Chriſtians had ſometimes reſt from public perſecution, as Acts ix. 31.; and Paul himſelf was not always in the hands of the magiſtrate; yea, our Lord, the great pattern of ſuffering, did not ſuffer publicly from the powers of the earth till the end; but he has foretold, that a man's foes ſhall be they of his own houſe, and private perſecution from friends and neighbours, and all ſorts of men that we live among in the world, for the ſake of Chriſt and his word, is no ſuch light thing as they that look on it at a diſtance may be ready to imagine; yea, the trial of cruel mockings for his ſake cannot be made eaſy but by that ſame grace that acted in Chriſt when he patiently endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame. The Pſalmiſt, in his name, complains of hypocritical mockers in feaſts, gnaſhing upon him with their teeth, and of his becoming a ſtranger unto his brethren, and an alien to mother's children, and of the men that ſit in the gate ſpeaking againſt him, and his being the ſong of the drunkards, &c. Different parties of worldly men, contending for pre-eminence in this world, will be ridiculing and reproaching one another; but it is another thing, and requires more ſelf denial, to be ſuffering from all ſorts of men for the word of God, than to be enduring for the ſake of a man's ſelf, in purſuing and hoping to attain the honour, gain, or eaſe of a preſent world. The clergy have endured much to raiſe themſelves in the world, and maintain what they have gained; but the ſufferings of the firſt Chriſtians were not attended with any worldly hope, and they were ſupported under them with no hope but that which is propoſed in the goſpel. Paul declares his diſpoſition in this matter, and his expectation of the concurrence of every confirmed Chriſtian, when he ſays, "Yea, doubtleſs and I count all things but loſs, "that I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, "and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conform-"able unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto "the reſurrection of the dead.—Let us therefore as many as "be perfect be thus minded."— Phil. iii.

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As he there ſtates an oppoſition betwixt his way and that of the Judaizers who minded earthly things, ſo here he ſtates an oppoſition between living godly in Chriſt with ſuffering, and the way of the men contending for the form of godlineſs without the power of it: for he ſays,—"But evil men and "ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being de-"ceived." He tells the Galatians how ſuch men were ſhunning the croſs by corrupting the goſpel, reconciling it ſome way to its enemies, eſpecially in points whereat they were moſt enraged. And, in after ages, the deſire of conformity to the world, and of friendſhip with it, worked in that ſame way, and produced the form of godlineſs with a denial of the power of it; and ſo men went farther and farther from the old purpoſe of conformity to a humbled Chriſt, and from the Chriſtian patience of hope, till they began to think not only of eſcaping perſecution themſelves, but even of perſecuting others; ſo that at length the form of godlineſs became an engine of perſecution againſt the power of godlineſs, as well as a proper mean of ſtrife and bloodſhed among themſelves, differing about the ſeveral parts of that form as their intereſts led them. And all this was carried on with the faireſt pretences of zeal for the honour of Chriſt and Chriſtian prudence; yea, it became a principle of Chriſtianity to perſecute; and the ancient doctrine of love to enemies, and patient bearing of wrongs, and the like, came to be as an old almanack calculated only for the time of Chriſt and his apoſtles. Therefore ſays the Apoſtle, "All that will live godly in Chriſt Je-"ſus ſhall ſuffer; but evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe "and worſe, deceiving and being deceived."

Let them, therefore, that have reformation indeed at heart, ſhew the ſame temper of mind that the Apoſtle oppoſes to that of the Antichriſtian generation. Let them ſeparate themſelves to live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, deſiring conformity to him in his humiliation, and ſhewing the hope of conformity to him in his glory. And let not theſe men ſpeak of their ſuffering as Chriſtians, who are at the ſame time ſhewing the hope of large contributions for their life in this world, from an enraged multitude, and boaſting in this, and in the hope of a numerous following, and a ſtrong party to make head againſt another faction, yea, and profeſſing the principle of perſecution, and of the extirpation of all ſects but their own out of the nation, as ſoon as it ſhall be in their power, and that, they hope, will be after this evil day is over. For ſuch men will have a form of godlineſs

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ſuited unto theſe things wherein they boaſt, and ſhun every confeſſion and practice in religion that appears inconſiſtent with theſe things, let it be never ſo clear in the New Teſtament. So their ſeparation cannot be a turning away from them that have a form of godlineſs denying the power of it, but a diviſion from that form in one ſhape to eſtabliſh it in another.

Let ſuch as want to ſee goſpel-reformation look on every opportunity of ſeparating the croſs and Chriſtianity, by abating a very little of its rigour, as a ſtrong temptation and guard againſt it. Let them treat every occaſion of riſing in this world, and being avenged on their enemies, as our Lord treated the vogue of the multitude, and their purpoſes of making him a king. And while they give the ſtricteſt obedience, and pay the greateſt deference to magiſtrates, as the New Teſtament commands, and reject all them that are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities, let them beware of all the tricks the clergy have been playing with the magiſtrate from the days of Conſtantine. But let them reckon themſelves, as every firſt church of the ſaints did, complete in Chriſt, the head of all principality and power, head over all the heavenly hoſts, powers of heaven, powers of hell, and powers of the earth, unto the church which is his body, unto whom therefore every member of that body has a readier and more immediate acceſs than to any of his vaſſals, on whom they muſt not depend, but hold that head under whom they are all working together for the good of his body the church; and whatever way they behave under the conduct of his providence, they are working together to bring the nations of them that are ſaved into the new Jeruſalem, who have their dependence on none but their head; and all the powers in the creation, good or bad, are ſerving them, while they hold that head.

Theſe three directions, given by the Apoſtle againſt the perils of the laſt times, are thus laid before the conſciences of them, eſpecially that ſhew any deſire to eſcape theſe perils; and, however theſe may treat them now, their conſciences will one way or other anſwer upon them before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.

A Letter to Mr JOHN WILLISON, on a paſſage in his ſynodical ſermon, concerning ILLITERATE MINISTERS.

He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. —— *And he gave ſome paſtors and teachers,—for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come,* &c. Eph. iv. 7.—14. —— *And ye are complete in him,* Col. ii. 8. 9. 10.

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SIR,

IT no way ſurpriſes me, that when the cry of the danger of the church is popular, you ſhould appear as the author of a ſermon or pamphlet bearing that title; but I confeſs I cannot ſo eaſily underſtand how you imagine that your church is in danger from a ſect which you ſay "is lately "riſen among us, who decry the knowledge of human "arts and ſciences, and of the languages, as unneceſſary for "goſpel-miniſters, and therefore make choice of illiterate "men for that office."

This complaint of illiterate miniſters would have come more ſeaſonably to your church, when they depoſed Meſſ. Colvil and Ramſay, and licenſed John Gillone, than at this day, when your ſect is every where complaining of the church's danger, from men in reſpect of whom you yourſelves are illiterate men. Your fathers, the covenanters, that abjured Independency, depoſed two able miniſters, and exceeding peaceable members of ſociety, and ſet up an illiterate man to preach the goſpel: but the men of letters, of whom you ſtand in fear, have only declared a few turbulent members of their ſociety to be none of that ſociety, of which they pretended to be a conſiderable part, while they would not walk orderly in it. And you cannot charge theſe men of letters with the crime of palming illiterate men upon you.

The ſect that makes choice of illiterate men for miniſters

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is none of your ſociety: their miniſters are not, pretend not to be miniſters of your church, and they impoſe their miniſtry upon none. It cannot be eaſily believed, that you are ſeeking to promote the welfare of that ſect, in the warning you give of the danger of illiterate miniſters: and as little can it be perceived, what is the danger of your church from ſuch inſignificant uſeleſs perſons as you repreſent them to be. What have you to fear from ſuch men as have neither ſkill nor power to handle againſt an adverſary the only weapon they pretend to uſe? Or is your church in danger from the weakneſs of her adverſaries? Yet if, while you are giving warning of your church's danger, you are alſo ſo good as to point out to that ſect its danger likewiſe, that ſect is certainly obliged to you.

After all, who knows but perhaps you have a ſecret fear, that through theſe illiterate miniſters "your craft may be in "danger of being ſet at nought;" and while you are far below the prevailing party in the knowledge of letters, and ſeek to excel in popular preaching, they may ſome way rival you in that among the people that know not letters, on whom you have the greateſt influence? Yet I am of opinion, you need have no great fear on this head; when I conſider the ſubject of their preaching, "the kingdom of "heaven, the kingdom that is not of this world;" which can never take with the multitude, as does the preaching of your covenanted kingdom; and when I think on the ſtrictneſs of their diſcipline, to which your followers, that can be eſteemed good Chriſtians at an eaſier rate, will not eaſily ſubmit; eſpecially when they muſt loſe all their eſteem among you as Chriſtians, and become the objects of univerſal contempt the moment they ſubmit to it.

Perhaps you have a ſuſpicion, that, as it ſometimes happens to the beſt fencers in duelling, even ſo it may poſſibly fare with you in a conflict with theſe ſame illiterate men. A literate friend of yours (for ſo we muſt call you) made a ſcornful attack, not long ago, upon ſome of theſe miniſters; and all the authority he could diſplay, all the grimace he was maſter of, was not ſufficient to bear them down: Impudent fellows that they were! They handled their weapon in defence, till he thought he had enough of it, if he be capable of ſuch a thought. But you are a little wiſer. Your way, as far as it is above board, is, to ſhow in your *concio ad clerum*, That the church is in danger from a ſet of men, to whom it is a great loſs they want letters.

It had been ſtill a queſtion with me, if you indeed apprehended any danger to your church from theſe men, if your inſinuation of a compariſon to Julian, that infamous apoſtate, had not betrayed your inward fear, or inclination to fill others with the greateſt fear of danger from that airth; that all whom your compariſon may touch, may be abhorred as haters of Zion, and that none who would be reckoned lovers of Zion may join iſſue with any whom you have been able to claſs with that infamous apoſtate. That this good end may be reached, you take care to make that Julian no better than he was. You ſay, the devil learned Julian to take away the maintenance of miniſters, and put down their ſchools of learning; that he was guilty of robbing of miniſters and ſchools of learning of their maintenance and revenues; and hereupon you agree with the obſervation of your fathers and predeceſſors, that he did more miſchief to the church and her miniſters than the bloody Diocleſian; and you give this reaſon for it, That hereby he hindered a ſucceſſion of able miniſters in the church, while, when Diocleſian took many eminent men away, there ſtill aroſe others in their ſtead. The inference muſt be, that the church is in greater danger from the ſect that you repreſent as joining iſſue with that Julian, than from the moſt bloody perſecutor. This ancient obſervation, and the reaſon you bring to ſupport it, comes very natively from clergymen; but you muſt excuſe people of another character, if they cannot perceive the juſtneſs of it. For they cannot think, that the church and her miniſters enjoyed any of theſe things by Diocleſian, whereof you ſay Julian robbed them; and if the taking away the maintenance that they had not under Diocleſian, hindered a ſucceſſion of able miniſters in the time of Julian, which the taking away of their lives alſo could not hinder in the time of Diocleſian; it muſt be inferred, that theſe who deſired the office of the miniſtry in Julian's time, were men of a very different ſort from theſe that deſired it in the time of Diocleſian. It may be a queſtion, if Julian deprived the Chriſtian miniſtry of any thing the goſpel gave them; and it has been alſo obſerved, that Conſtantine did more harm to the church than Julian and Diocleſian were capable to do, by their different ways of oppoſition to it: for that which ambitious covetous miniſters reckon to be their intereſt, is not the intereſt of the profeſſion of the name of Chriſt. It is certain, no true clergyman will join iſſue ſo far with Julian, as to declare theſe things unneceſſary for them of which he deprived them; but

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no lover of Zion or the true church, if not abuſed by the clergy, can be offended, that their covetouſneſs and ambition is not gratified. Your ſort of men applaud Conſtantine, whoſe moral character is as diſagreeable to the rules of the goſpel as Julian's; and Jovian, a debauched man, but a firm friend to that ſort of Chriſtianity and Chriſtian miniſtry that was in thoſe days, is as famous among you as Julian is infamous.

Becauſe it may tend to your inſtruction, I ſhall take the trouble to tranſcribe a paſſage concerning Julian from the author of The Fable of the Bees. The paſſage is as follows.

" —— When Emperors were once become Chriſtians, the " clergy received ſuch power and other worldly comfort from " their authority, that they could not think of living without, " and therefore loſt all patience when Julian was advanced to " the empire. They did and ſaid againſt him every thing " that rage and hatred could inſpire, and fixed upon him the " ſirname of *Apoſtate*, to render him odious, which has " ſtuck by him to this day. Julian had been differently edu- " cated, as well at Pagan as at Chriſtian univerſities, and at " one time he had Heathens, and at another Chriſtians for " his tutors: but I never ſaw it proved, that he adhered to " Chriſtianity at a time he might with ſafety have refuſed it. " It muſt be confeſſed, that as ſoon as he was maſter of his " choice, he made the worſt, and unfortunately embraced " Paganiſm, becauſe it was the religion of his anceſtors.

" But let him be called Heathen or Apoſtate, or what the " clergy pleaſes, to judge of him impartially from hiſtory, " we muſt own, that he was a virtuous and gallant prince, " endued with wit and humanity, and more ſteddineſs and " moderation than any of his Chriſtian predeceſſors. In " his letters, he appears to have been a father to his people; " and one of them I will take leave to inſert here, which " will make us perfectly well acquainted with the tolerating " temper of that prince, and at the ſame time, point at the " real cauſe of the clergy's animoſities againſt him.

Julian to the Boſtrens.

" I Should have thought, indeed, that the Galilean leaders " would have eſteemed themſelves more indebted to me " than to him who preceded me in the adminiſtration of the " empire: for, in his time, many of them ſuffered exile, " perſecution, and impriſonment; multitudes of thoſe whom " in their religion, they term *heretics*, were put to the " ſword;

" ſword; inſomuch, that in Samoſata, Cyzicum, Paphla-
" gonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and many other countries, whole
" towns were levelled with the earth. The juſt reverſe of
" this has been obſerved in my time. The exiles have been
" recalled, and the proſcribed reſtored to the lawful poſſeſ-
" ſions of their eſtates: but to that height of fury and diſ-
" traction are this people arrived, that, being no longer al-
" lowed the privilege to tyranniſe over one another, or per-
" ſecute either their own ſectaries, or the religious of the
" lawful church, they ſwell with rage, and leave no ſtone un-
" turned, no opportunity unemployed, of raiſing tumult and
" ſedition. So little regard have they to true piety, ſo little
" obedience to our laws and conſtitutions, however humane
" and tolerating. For ſtill do we determine, and ſteadily re-
" ſolve, never to ſuffer one of them involuntarily to be
" drawn unto our altars. * * * As for the mere people, in-
" deed, they appear driven to theſe riots and ſeditions by
" theſe amongſt them whom they call *clerics*; who are now
" inraged to find themſelves reſtrained in the uſe of their for-
" mer power and intemperate rule. * * * They can no longer
" act the magiſtrate, or civil judge, nor aſſume authority to
" make people's wills, ſupplant relations, poſſeſs themſelves
" of other mens patrimonies, by ſpecious pretences, transfer
" all into their own poſſeſſion. For this reaſon, I have
" thought fit, by this public edict, to forewarn the people of
" this ſort, that they raiſe no more commotions, nor gather
" in a riotous manner about their ſeditious clerics, in de-
" fiance of the magiſtrate, who has been inſulted, and in
" danger of being ſtoned by theſe incited rabbles. In their
" congregations, they may notwithſtanding aſſemble, as they
" pleaſe, and croud about their leaders performing worſhip,
" receiving doctrine, and praying according as they are by
" them taught and conducted: but if with any tendency to
" ſedition, let them beware how they hearken or give aſſent,
" and remember it is at their peril, if, by theſe means, they
" are ſecretly wrought up to mutiny and inſurrection.
" * * * Live therefore in peace and quietneſs, neither ſpite-
" fully oppoſing, or injuriouſly treating one another. You
" miſguided people of the new way, beware on your ſide!
" And you of the ancient eſtabliſhed church, injure not
" your neighbours and fellow-citizens, who are enthuſiaſti-
" cally led away in ignorance and miſtake, rather than with
" deſign or malice. It is by diſcourſe and reaſon, not by
" blows, inſults, or violence, that men are to be informed

" of

" of truth, and convinced of error. Again, therefore, and " again, I injoin and charge the zealous followers of the " true religion, no wiſe to injure, moleſt, or affront, the " Galilean people."

" Theſe were the ſentiments of this Emperor, whom the " clergy make ſuch a monſter, and whoſe very clemency " they make a handle of for ſlander, complaining, that, by " his mildneſs and unlimited toleration, he had done more " prejudice to the church than others with perſecution. He " was a politic prince, yet the clergy proved too hard for " him, and never ceaſed plotting againſt him, till at laſt, to " the great joy of the orthodox, he was aſſaſſinated by one " of his own Chriſtian ſoldiers."

Thus far my author. And, as his ſtory tells, if the devil was teaching Julian this method with the Chriſtians of thoſe days, you may ſee he was not his only ſcholar at that time: for, according to the ſcripture-account of the devil's teaching and influence, the Heathens, whom Julian was reſtraining from injuring, moleſting, or affronting the Chriſtians, and not they only, but the Chriſtian clergy eſpecially, ſeem to have been very good proficients at his ſchool, for the time they had been at it; and Julian did not think they deſerved to be ſo treated by their fellow-diſciples of another claſs. The myſtery of iniquity began to work, even among the illiterate men that were ſet apart to the office of the miniſtry, in the days of the apoſtles; but when they got theſe things from Conſtantine that Julian took from them, you ſee how they behaved.

Your warning of the danger of an illiterate miniſtry begins with an advice to your brethren to be as the well-furniſhed ſcribe, that bringeth forth out of his treaſure things new and old. Where you point to our Lord's ſaying to his diſciples, after he had been inſtructing them in the nature of the kingdom of heaven by parables, and inquiring, if they underſtood them, Matth. xiii. 51. 52. when they anſwered, that they did, he ſays to them, " Therefore every ſcribe, which is in- " ſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man " that is an houſeholder, which bringeth forth out of his " treaſure things new and old." You give us ſome explication of this text, ſo far as you quote it; the ſcribes treaſure you ſay, is a ſtock of neceſſary and uſeful knowledge, out of which variety of proviſion may be brought for the entertainment of people's ſouls: " The prieſts lips ſhould preſerve

" know-

" knowledge." But this explication is more general, and leſs clear than the text itſelf, as it ſtands in connection with the context: the text ſays, " Therefore every ſcribe which " is inſtructed (or taught) unto the kingdom of heaven." And you alſo go about to enlarge the text of the Old Teſtament that you cite in confirmation of your gloſs, by forbearing to mention the latter part of it, which, as it ſtands in that context, Mal. ii. would have told what *knowledge* it is that the " prieſts lips ſhould preſerve." If by *the law* there you will not underſtand only " the law of truth, the law of " the Lord;" but will extend it to ſignify the law of the Roman empire, and the municipal laws of the nations, then you ought to have given that law a place among the ſciences, your handmaids to ſcripture-knowledge: and I am ſure it deſerved a place in your catalogue as well as any of them. Next, for an explication of " things new and old," you have a variety of proviſion for the entertainment of people's ſouls, which variety you diſtribute under two heads. 1. Their ſouls muſt be entertained with ſcripture-knowledge, the knowledge of God, his perfections, the myſtery of the Trinity and of Jeſus Chriſt our ſurety and ſacrifice. Here you are a little more particular, but take care never to mention " the kingdom of heaven," of which the text ſpeaks. 2. The people's ſouls muſt be entertained with the knowledge of human arts and ſciences, and of the languages, eſpecially theſe in which the Bible was firſt written. And here again you are more copious than on the firſt head: you have a great variety here of proviſion for the entertainment of people's ſouls; hiſtory, philoſophy, mathematics, geography, aſtronomy, and polemic divinity. And thus we have your ſenſe of " the things new and old," which ſerve to ſhew, that illiterate men cannot be " the ſcribes" of whom the Lord there ſpeaks. But, after all you have ſaid, the illiterate may find you very lame, both in quoting and explaining the words of this text; and that you have wreſted this ſcripture in ſuch a manner as to bring a ſort of ſcribes out of it that was never in it. The ſcribe of whom the text ſpeaks is a " ſcribe inſtructed in or unto the kingdom of heaven;" but this is not once mentioned in the inſtruction of your ſcribe. The " things new and old" that the text ſpeaks of are the things of " the kingdom of heaven," which " be- " gan to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf," and were preached by his apoſtles to the nations, and committed to writing in the books of the New Teſtament. Theſe were the ſcribes whom Chriſt told the Jews he would " ſend to them,"

Matth.

Matth. xxiii. 34. 35. And when they came to them, their doctors "perceived, that they were unlearned and ignorant "men," but "took knowledge of them that they had been "with Jeſus," Acts iv. 13. as the Jews before marvelled when they heard himſelf teach, "how he knew the ſcriptures" (γράμματα comp. 2 Tim. iii. 15.) "being unlearned," John vii. 15. They knew he could read the ſcriptures as other Jews did in the ſynagogues, but how could the "ſon of the "carpenter," without the education of the ſcribes, take upon him to do their office; or, in a more modern ſtile, jump from his trade into the pulpit? Now theſe ſcribes, whom he firſt inſtructed and ſent forth to make out the New-Teſtament revelation, and commit it to writing, "ſaid none other "things than theſe which the prophets and Moſes did ſay "ſhould come," Acts xxvi. 22. And thus the "things "brought forth out of the treaſure," committed to theſe "earthen veſſels," were new, and they were old. Theſe "ſcribes brought forth the knowledge of the glory of God, "in the face of Jeſus Chriſt," that had been of old ſhewed through "a veil" by Moſes and the prophets. Theſe "ſtewards of the myſteries of God ſpake the wiſdom of God, "that was hid in myſtery, and not the wiſdom of this "world, nor of the princes of this world, who knew not "the wiſdom of God" that was "hid in myſtery;" which wiſdom theſe ſcribes ſpake, "not in the words which man's "wiſdom teacheth," but, with great plainneſs and ſimplicity, took the words of the Holy Ghoſt in the Old Teſtament, from a tranſlation then in common uſe, and applied them to the things of the kingdom of heaven in the New Teſtament, according to the prime intent of theſe words, which was "revealed to them by the Holy Ghoſt" that indited them. The Lord ſpake by figures concerning the kingdom of heaven, and explained theſe to his ſcribes; and the New-Teſtament revelation, which he gave them to bring forth to the world, is the plain declaration of the ſame things that had been foreſhewed of old in the dark prophecies and figures of the Old Teſtament: wherefore he ſays, "Every ſcribe in-"ſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, bringeth forth out "of his treaſure things new and old." Whoſoever is ſkilled in this wiſdom that is taught in the New Teſtament, ſo as to be able to teach it to others, is now the Chriſtian ſcribe; and what a difference is there betwixt this and the knowledge of your ſcribe? which is "the wiſdom of words, the wiſ-"dom of this world, the wiſdom of the Jewiſh ſcribe," and

of "the diſputer of this world, and mans wiſdom," which is "fooliſhneſs with God," and was manifeſted by him to be fooliſhneſs, before he brought forth his wiſdom that was hid in myſtery to the view of the world, in that preaching which was a ſtumbling block to the Jewiſh ſcribe, and fooliſhneſs to the Grecian diſputers and orators: but unto all whom "he called, the wiſdom of God, and the power of God." Whatever difference the ſcriptures make betwixt theſe two kinds of wiſdom, you ſtill affirm the "wiſdom of the Jewiſh "ſcribe and the wiſdom of the diſputer of this world," is a good handmaid to ſcripture-knowledge, and ſerves to promote the welfare of your church. Your reaſon is as wide as the explication of your text. For, ſay you, an ignorant miniſtry is a reproach to any church. If you be punning on the word *ignorant*, and punning be reaſoning, you have hit it; but if you indeed ſay, that ignorance of the human arts and ſciences before mentioned is a reproach to any church, this will need another reaſon to confirm it. I hope you do not mean, "that the man Chriſt Jeſus, (ſuffer the expreſſion, becauſe it is ſcripture), the head of his body the church," (without which he could not be its head), is a reproach to that church, becauſe he never was taught, nor did teach in his church, theſe arts and ſciences taught in your ſchools, wherein you would have your expectants to be trained for ſcripture-knowledge. Neither can I perſuade myſelf, that you think the fiſhers of Galilee, who were not ſkilled in theſe ſciences, were a reproach to the church that is built on their doctrine, or Paul, a Jewiſh ſcribe, but a babbler at Athens, where Jeſus ſent him, when he did not allow him to ſtay and preach in Jeruſalem, the place where his learning would have ſerved him beſt, and who "came not with excellency of "ſpeech or of man's wiſdom, declaring the teſtimony of "God;" yea, whatever force was in his inſpired writings, ſome that were Chriſtians and teachers in his day reckoned "his bodily preſence weak, and his ſpeech contemptible." By your ſkill in eccleſiaſtic hiſtory, you can tell us, if the miniſters that the apoſtles left behind them in the churches, and who lived in the age next to them, were generally men ſkilled in the arts and ſciences of which you give us a catalogue; and if they were not for the moſt part knowing in thoſe ſciences, I have reaſon to think you will not call them a reproach to the church. Neither can I believe that you think it a reproach to the Chriſtian law-giver, that, in condeſcending on the particular qualifications of that miniſtry, which

which he inſtituted to continue to the end of the world, he does not ſo much as mention the knowledge of theſe arts and ſciences, the ignorance of which, you ſay, is a reproach to any church. And therefore I muſt reckon you mean churches have been reproached with this ignorance of their miniſters. This is true in fact: the "diſputers of the world" laughed at the preaching of the goſpel, till there came up a philoſophical miniſtry: but then they departed from the "ſimplicity that "is in Chriſt, and corrupted" the goſpel, and ſo they gained that eſteem in the world which they could not have "till "the glory departed" from them. If it be your mind, that your expectants ſhould avoid the old reproach, and ſeek that eſteem which has come in place of it, by qualifying themſelves for the miniſtry with theſe ſciences; it is my mind, on the other hand, that theſe illiterate miniſters ſhould be content it be perceived "they are unlearned and ignorant "men," and to be called babblers, that God's name may be "excellent, in ordaining ſtrength out of the mouth of babes," while "he confounds the wiſdom of the wiſe," and, "by the "fooliſhneſs of preaching, ſaves them that believe."

After all that you have ſaid of the neceſſity of theſe ſciences, are you well ſkilled in them yourſelf? And if you be, is it not a great neglect in you, that the ſouls of your people are not entertained with that knowledge? I only wonder, that when you commend ſo many arts, wherein you have not inſtructed your people, and wherein few have perceived you to be very knowing, you have not mentioned the politics, or rather that which by itſelf poſſeſſes the name *art*? I plead for a room to this in your catalogue of ſciences; becauſe it is, at leaſt, as neceſſary to a governor of your church as any of them: for at no time was it governed without it; yea, you know how uſeful it is to you in the conduct of your flock in Dundee. All your collections from your orthodox books, in the diſputes you have had with Epiſcopals and Independents, and your collections from practical writers and the ſermons of your brethren, will not manifeſt you to be ſo far above the illiterate in the knowledge of human arts and ſciences, as you are in *art*. The very riſe of that ſect of which you now complain, was owing to your *art*, as one mean in the hand of holy Providence, and after an application of all your *art* in the riſe of that ſect, your ſilence and forbearance of open oppoſition to it, was a piece of *art*, that, for ought I know, you learned from Julian: for no man will believe it was intended for the proſperity of that

ſect, any more than his forbearance to the ſect that differed from his eſtabliſhed church was intended for the proſperity of that ſect. And now that you have broke ſilence again, there is certainly *art* in that alſo. There is more art than reaſoning in what you ſay againſt the illiterate miniſters; and I fear it is not ſo much your meaning, that the people's ſouls ſhould be entertained with the ſciences of which you ſpeak, as that they ſhould be fed with the fancy that you have them, and ſo are only capable to teach them ſcripture-knowledge; and that, being ignorant of thoſe mighty ſciences, they may not dare to differ from your gloſſes on the ſcripture, nor hearken to illiterate men, who, for want of the ſciences, cannot explain the ſcriptures. Theſe illiterate miniſters, if letters could do their buſineſs, have far more need of them than you, who are already in the eſteem of the multitude far wiſer than you really are, and who, according to your own principles, can never have much uſe for philoſophy and criticiſm in confuting heretics: for you know you have no more to do, but to ſit down in a preſbytery or ſynod, and vote againſt hereſy, and then call on the magiſtrate to extirpate it, or root out the heretics; whereas the illiterate have nothing but the word of God, and if they cannot manage that, as it is "mighty "through God," and not through the ſciences, they can do nothing. Yet if they prevail in the leaſt againſt error, God will have more honour than in thoſe that need leſs dependence on him, and uſe means to keep themſelves off from that dependence; and if the fruits of their miniſtry in Angus, and the works of their diſciples be compared with yours, it may poſſibly appear, that the word of God alone is "the "power of God to ſalvation," and that there is no reaſon "to be aſhamed of it," without your ſciences.

You tell us, that, for acquiring theſe arts and ſciences, there ought to be ſchools of learning, as there were ſchools of the prophets of old. But were theſe arts and ſciences taught in the ſchools of the prophets of old? And do you imagine that your expectants and young preachers are the ſucceſſors of the young prophets, and you, or the teachers of the ſciences, the ſucceſſors of the old ones? And if paſtors and teachers be to be trained up in ſchools, as were the prophets, what ſchools do you read of for them in the New Teſtament, but the churches of the ſaints? The pure "word of "God founded out" at firſt from the churches; but the firſt hereſies came in from the ſchools of the Jewiſh ſcribes, and from the ſchools of the Heathen philoſophers; and the firſt Chriſtian

Chriſtian ſchool at Alexandria produced Arianiſm. When the miniſtry of the goſpel came to be attended with worldly honour and gain, all that ſought to be employed in it for the ſake of theſe, were not fitted by Jeſus Chriſt to "be paſtors "and teachers," and his gift alone, though ſufficient for its end, was not ſufficient to bear them out in the figure they behoved to make in the world, as the ſucceſſors of the Heathen prieſts: and therefore they behoved to have ſuch qualifications as could be attained the ſame way that men attain qualifications for other worldly employments. Thus men came to be miniſters of the goſpel as they came to be lawyers and phyſicians. The Heathens at firſt ridiculed Chriſtianity; but as it grew upon them, in ſpite of all the methods that uſe to be taken with ſuch as are not to be reaſoned with, they began to exerciſe their ſkill in diſputing againſt it. This proved a temptation to ſuch Chriſtians as had letters, to lay aſide the old "weapons," that were mighty "through God for caſting down imaginations, and every "high thought exalting itſelf againſt the knowledge of "Chriſt," and contend with "carnal weapons," or oppoſe the "wiſdom of words," and defend the goſpel againſt it, by "the wiſdom of words." But inſtead of maintaining the cauſe of the goſpel this way, they in effect gave it up, and corrupted the doctrine of Chriſt, by an endeavour to reconcile it as much as might be to the "wiſdom of the diſputer "of this world." Thus the goſpel became a ſcience, inſtead of a "word of faith," and the old difference betwixt theſe two, ſtated by the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. i. & ii. was in a great meaſure done away. And thus, "as Satan beguiled Eve through "his ſubtilty, their minds were corrupted from the ſimpli-"city that is in Chriſt." This went on, and continues to this day, under all the various ſhapes of the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, where-ever expectants, as you call them, inſtead of "holding faſt the faithful word in teaching, that they "may be able by ſound doctrine both to exhort and con-"vince the gainſayers," are profeſſors of oppoſitions of ſcience falſely ſo called, or of polemic divinity.

When you have ſtated the opinion and practice of the ſect lately riſen among us, you make a ſuppoſition, that the devil ſhould ſtir up Arians, Socinians, and Deiſts, to attack our holy religion. This ſuppoſition may be allowed; for it is matter of fact, books written by men of letters againſt the faith of the Son of God, and againſt the truth of Chriſtianity, are in the hands of your people, and taking with them,

them. Infidelity is growing and ſpreading apace; and the courſe of the world that has been in the channel of ſuperſtition, under the Chriſtian name, to the great diſhonour of that name, (from the days of Conſtantine, but eſpecially from the time the clergy came up as the "eighth head" of the Roman empire, and "the ten kings gave their power to "the beaſt to make one opinion"), is now turning into the channel of Infidelity, to the great grief of the clergy of all ſorts; becauſe it ſhakes their throne, and fills their kingdom with darkneſs. When you have laid down your ſuppoſition, you propoſe your argument in a queſtion, *What could ſuch men do to defend it?* And they will perhaps inquire again, ſeeing your temporal intereſt and your authority in the world lies at the ſtake, What are you doing to defend it? Men of letters, both in the church of England and your church, have been writing defences; but what have any of your ſect in this church offered that is worth the reading? You can in your manner find fault with the writers for Chriſtianity, and charge them with betraying the cauſe, while you cannot ſay it is through their want of letters. You contend for the evidence that the teſtimony of God in the goſpel carries in itſelf, and is beheld by them whoſe underſtandings he opens to underſtand the ſcriptures, and behold that evidence in them, and you do well. But is that evidence to be ſeen only in the original Hebrew and Greek text? Or could they at Rome perceive it, where I ſuppoſe Paul ſpoke it in Latin to the Romans, as they of Athens did, to whom I ſuppoſe he ſpoke Greek? And could the Greeks perceive any evidence in his references to the Old Teſtament, which he cited to them in Greek, as did theſe to whom he ſpoke in the Hebrew tongue? Next tell us, is this evidence that the word of God in the ſcriptures carries in itſelf, to be perceived only by the "ſcribes and diſ-"puters of this world," the critics, philoſophers, aſtronomers, mathematicians, polemic divines, geographers, hiſtorians, *&c.?* Or alſo by the "babes," the "fooliſh, baſe "things of this world?" And is it to be communicated to others by "the wiſdom of words, or in that plain ſimple manner wherein it is declared in the ſcriptures? Then let us underſtand what advantage you have here with your letters beyond the illiterate? We are ſtill at a loſs to know what you can do to defend the Chriſtian doctrine by your letters againſt the adverſaries. What adverſary have you baffled? Or whom have you converted by the power of your learning, or otherwiſe, from Socinianiſm, Arianiſm, or Deiſm? You have had

Infidels

Infidels to deal with in Dundee; but what did you, beyond raiſing an uſe of lamentation in the pulpit, and telling them in private, that they ſhould be hanged? An illiterate man would have taken another courſe; he would have plainly told them the evidence that he himſelf ſaw in the goſpel, and how the atheiſm and infidelity of his own heart was quelled by the word of God; and if he prevailed not, he would pray for them, and ſhew them the truth of Chriſtianity in his life, and even in deeds of good-will to them; while, at the ſame time, he would ſuffer no member of the Chriſtian ſociety, wherein he is concerned, to lead a life of contradiction to any part of the goſpel, but "take heed to himſelf, and the "whole flock," to have "a converſation becoming the go-"ſpel." This is the ſect lately riſen, againſt which you ſeem ſo much diſpleaſed; but why ſhould it diſpleaſe you, that, while there are ſo many of you trained up in letters, and well hired to defend your goſpel, a ſet of people ſhould engage in this way of the defence of Chriſtianity againſt their worldly intereſt? Or what kind of men are ye, that neither defend Chriſtianity yourſelves, nor ſuffer the defence that either the literate or illiterate are offering to it?

Next, you inquire how they would do with Jeſuits? to which they will readily anſwer, even the ſame they do with you, while you ſubvert the goſpel "of the kingdom of hea-"ven" in many inſtances, and miſlead the people. Your little ſtories and your arguings in the mouths of your agents, come to their hand. They ſee through your arts and diſguiſes, they diſcover the fallacies of your arguings by the word of God, they maintain the truth of that word, and ſet ſome of your miſled people right; ſo would they do with Jeſuits.

You put their anſwer to your queſtions in the ſhape of an objection. O, ſay they, we have the word to oppoſe them; which is not ill ſaid. But what is your anſwer to this objection?

Had there not, ſay you, been men of learning before you to have tranſlated it, you even would not had that. Well, they have it; and I hope you do not grudge them this, as your fathers of the Roman church did, when the Lord, in his marvellous providence, brought the ſcriptures to light in the languages of the nations. The illiterate adore the wiſdom, goodneſs, and power of God in this, as they do in the firſt publication of the goſpel by the gift of tongues, before it was written, and likewiſe in the writing of it. And from this

this ſaying of yours, they have reaſon to think, that if you had been a clergyman, when it began to be tranſlated into the modern languages, you had at leaſt refuſed to uſe your learning that way, for fear of the conſequence and the danger that might come to the church thereby. The ſect of which you complain do not as you here inſinuate, decry the knowledge of the languages that is neceſſary for tranſlating the Bible, as they do not decry the art of printing, without which, you men of letters would have laboured under a vaſt diſadvantage; but as they will not ſay that no man but a printer can be a miniſter, neither dare they affirm, that none but a tranſlator is fit for that office. They ſuppoſe a man may be capable to tranſlate the Bible, and yet not qualified for the miniſtry, as the word of God directs, as another may be qualified for that office according to the ſcriptures, and yet know the word of God only in his own native language. The reading of the ſcriptures was much attended to in the firſt churches, and they could not all hear or know them, without being read to them; ſo they had readers who were not miniſters, fitter for that than for the miniſtry; yea, and perhaps fitter for reading than the miniſters themſelves: for no doubt you can inform us by your ſkill in hiſtory, if there were not miniſters in the firſt churches that could neither read nor write. But do you in earneſt affirm, that none are fit for the miniſtry but ſuch as are capable to tranſlate the Bible? And if you do, are you perſuaded that yourſelf is a miniſter, or many more with you, who content themſelves with as much knowledge of the Hebrew for ordinary as carries them through their trials? I remember of a letter that came to your preſbytery from one for whoſe miniſtry you had not a great regard, but he was a noble Hebrean. He inſulted the reverend preſbytery, by writing to them the words of a language which they were ſuppoſed to know, and he underſtood they knew not, and that was the Hebrew. This was a reflection upon them full as ſevere as any you have made on the men that are willing it be perceived they are unlearned and ignorant men. Further, you know how many of you are ruſted as to the little knowledge you had of the Greek Teſtament when you came off the irons. And are your conſciences ſo far ſeared, as not to give you the leaſt uneaſineſs, when you make your people believe, that others cannot be miniſters for the want of that knowledge of the ſacred languages which you yourſelves leaſt of all ſtudy?

Then

Then you inquire, what they would anſwer a Jeſuit, when he ſays the paſſage is not juſtly tranſlated? For it ſeems, though they have unhappily got that weapon, the word of God, in their hands, you ſtill hope they have not ſkill to uſe it; and your hope is founded in what you propoſe by way of queſtion to them. But how would you, though well ſkilled in the languages, defend your people againſt that Jeſuit, that have not letters, and are not capable to judge of what is ſaid of the juſtneſs of the tranſlation by the knowledge of the language? What could you anſwer him, to the ſatisfaction of your people's conſciences, that an illiterate man could not anſwer? And ſeeing you have taken up the Jeſuitical argument, for the honour of the church and the clergy, againſt theſe illiterate men, and their Engliſh Bible, could you blame any of your people that ſhould go off to the Roman church, becauſe they know not if the tranſlation be juſt; and when the queſtion came, whether they ſhould believe you or the learned Jeſuit, a clergyman of a more ancient church, in the knowledge of letters, with a pretence of infallibility, they choſe to believe the Jeſuit? You know the ſtrongeſt thing you have to ſay in this caſe againſt the Jeſuit, is what the illiterate may ſay as well as you. Or, are you indeed for the people's believing in your church, inſtead of their Engliſh Bible? Or, perhaps you'll come next to a queſtion, if a man can be ſaved without ſkill in the ſacred languages, yea, without the original manuſcripts? And clergymen have played the like of this, to keep ſouls in dependence on their authority.

But if theſe illiterate leaders be ſo ignorant of the word of God, their only weapon, and unable to uſe it, why do not you men of letters, by your ability to handle the word againſt them, reduce the people that are miſled by them to your obedience? And if you be not able to do that, why do you proclaim your own ſhame, by crying your church is in danger from men that want letters?

Your deſcription of the New-Teſtament miniſter comes not well in immediately after your diſcourſe of the neceſſity of the arts and ſciences to the miniſtry of the goſpel: for it will agree full as well to the illiterate as to men of letters. It is true, your deſcription is deficient, as to a main part of the character of ſuch a miniſter, which cannot be declared, without ſuch an underſtanding of the difference betwixt the Old Teſtament and the New, as you might learn from the illiterate men, the preachers of the kingdom of heaven. You

ſpeak of a New-Teſtament miniſter his making Chriſt all, and ſelf nothing; and yet you train up your young Chriſtians, by the queſtions you put to them, in the way of ſelf. For an illiterate man would eaſily ſee him that could readily anſwer them as they are propoſed, to be a ſelf-righteous Phariſee, and leaning, through ſelf-conceit, on the good diſpoſitions expreſſed in your queſtions, inſtead of the good pleaſure of God's goodneſs, and ſetting up to be a Chriſtian, in the confidence of a good diſpoſition toward it that he finds in his heart. You propoſe a great many things to your catechumen, who may be ignorant of the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, which are but ſuppoſed in your queſtions, and yet anſwer theſe queſtions; which he may alſo do without having the word of God for the only rule of his Chriſtianity. And yet theſe queſtions contain a covenant, which you ſay he muſt make with God. And who are you that would give us another covenant, and another miniſtry, than that we have in the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament?

It is not my province to point out the inconſiſtencies of your ſermon, in the things you offer againſt your brethren. That belongs to them, if they think it worth their while to take any notice of you. But if no other regard you, I hope you will accept of this, as a piece of ſervice done to you, and the truth which you oppoſe, by,

SIR,

Your well-wiſher,

and humble ſervant,

Edinburgh, January 8.
1734. JOHN GLAS.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

Take the following copy of a ſummons from the ſeſſion of one of your brethren, as an evidence of the ſucceſs of your preaching to them againſt illiterate miniſters. You need not queſtion if it be the effect of your warning, when you conſider how much ear he gave to your firſt warning, and how active he was upon it in the riſe of that ſect, which, to your great grief, is lately riſen among you. And you ſee him as ſenſible of his own call and miſſion, and of the neceſſity of human arts and ſciences in the miſſion to the office of the miniſtry, as you can deſire, and as far from joining iſſue with Julian as you could wiſh.

Ketins, the ſixteenth day of December One thouſand ſeven hundred and thirty-three years.

THE ſaid day the kirk-ſeſſion conſidering, That, by the wholeſome conſtitutions of this national church, and by the word of God itſelf, no man ought to intrude into the ſacred office of the miniſtry, without being called and ſent of God; nor ought they to be received into Chriſtian houſes, nor bid God ſpeed: Yet it is of verity, that you Alexander Morice weaver in the Gaſk, in this pariſh, upon the 30th day of November, have invited, welcomed to your houſe, and bidden God ſpeed to Don and Cant, pretended preachers, and encouraged them to make a ſhew of preaching, upon one or other of the days of this preſent month, in the barn of Patrick Ritchie in Paty, and this pariſh, as common fame goes; for which, if found true, you ought to be cenſured according to the demerit of your ſcandal. Extracted by,

ROB. CHRISTIE, Seſſ. Clk.

I James Watſon officer, by warrant from the above kirk-ſeſſion, ſummon you Alexander Morice, to compear before the kirk-ſeſſion Sabbath next, the 30th inſtant, to anſwer to the points of the above libel, with certification. This I give you December 21. 1733.

J. W.

A Diſſertation on INCEST.

A diſpute between Mr Glas and the preſbytery of Dundee, concerning the lawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage with J. M. his former wife's grand-niece, in 1729.

[Firſt publiſhed in the year 1730.]

Mr Glas's reaſons for the lawfulneſs of this marriage.

IT is manifeſt this marriage is upon none of theſe degrees expreſsly mentioned in the Levitical law, and more fully laid open in the common table, where the ſeveral inſtances upon the degrees of nearneſs of kindred and affinity are pointed out. When the Lord takes notice of the abominations of the Heathen in this matter of inceſt, for which he took vengeance on them, and with which he ſeverely diſcharges his people to defile themſelves; and when he makes ſo particular a condeſcenſion on the ſeveral degrees, and explains this his law in no other part of his word; and when he makes this a caſe of life and death; it ſeems an inference very juſt from this, That he hath left it free for any man to marry in any degree beyond theſe mentioned in the law.

Yet whatever is by juſt and neceſſary conſequence deducible from God's law, is certainly in it; and therefore every ſuch conſequence muſt have ſome foundation in the law itſelf. And if there be any thing in the Levitical law that leads us to ſee a marriage unlawful upon that degree whereon J. B.'s marriage is an inſtance, though that degree be not very expreſs in the law, then they who thus ſee it in the law muſt declare it unlawful, though it be really unlawful whether they ſee it or not: but, at the ſame time, it will not be eaſily thought, that the Lord made the life and death of the people of his kingdom to depend on a point not obvious in his law.

Now, let us ſee if we find any thing in the law of God upon

on this ſubject, from which we may infer the unlawfulneſs of marriage upon that degree whereon J. B.'s marriage is an inſtance.

And, 1. The law ſpeaks not of that diſtinction of the lines direct, collateral, and oblique, which men have uſed in the explication of it, and for giving a ready up-taking of the different degrees. And no reaſon can be given why the expreſs prohibition goes not ſo far downward upon the oblique line as upon the direct, if we have not recourſe to the reaſon mentioned in the law; or why there is but one degree forbidden expreſsly upon the oblique line, and but one upon the collateral, while there are as it were two (though they be but upon the matter one, as we ſhall ſee) upon the direct line, eſpecially if we conſider that it is far more eaſy by nature's light to make an inference from one generation to another upon the direct line, than upon the oblique or collateral. The preſbytery ſeems to labour under a groſs miſtake, in confounding the direct line and the oblique, reckoning, that, as they draw or fancy a line from the brother to his brother's daughter through his brother, ſo there is ſuch a real derivation of blood from that brother to his brother's daughter, as there is from her grandfather to her upon the direct line: and by this chimerical fancy, to which their line leads them, they muſt hold a higher degree of inceſt in the marriage of uncle and niece, than in the marriage of a brother and ſiſter upon the collateral line; whereas the nearneſs of brother and ſiſter in blood is beyond all poſſibility of contradiction preſuppoſed unto the nearneſs of uncle and niece.

2. It is evident there is no room left in this law of God for drawing inferences, by taking the words or names of the related perſons in ſtricter or larger ſenſes: for though there be ſuch words made uſe of in this law, as occurs in other places of ſcripture, in a larger ſenſe; yet that ſenſe is plainly excluded in this law. And we had been left at the utmoſt uncertainty if it had been otherwiſe, as we may ſee by this inſtance, Lev. xviii. 9. "The nakedneſs of thy ſiſter, the "daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, born "at home or abroad, their nakedneſs thou ſhalt not uncover." If we take father and ſiſter, and daughter of the father, in ſuch a ſenſe as they frequently bear in ſcripture, it will be unlawful for, not couſin-germans only, but for their children and children's children ſtill downwards, to marry together; and ſo no marriage, even in the collateral way, will be at all lawful: for if any man deſcended of the one couſin

ſhould

ſhould marry a woman deſcended of the other, he would in that caſe uncover the nakedneſs of his ſiſter, the daughter of his father, and that in a ſcripture-ſenſe of the words *father* and *ſiſter*, and *daughter of the father*, and the ſame man is ſtill the father in this ſenſe of all that deſcend from on both the lines, which are from him direct, and ſo are all that ſtand upon theſe lines collaterally to one another ſtill ſons and daughters of the ſame father, and brothers and ſiſters in the ſcripture-ſenſe of the word: but in this law the Lord keeps cloſe to the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the words, as we ſee ℣ 10. The words *ſon* and *daughter* ſtand in their ſtricteſt ſenſe, and the largeſt ſenſe is avoided. "The nakedneſs of thy ſon's daugh-"ter, or of thy daughter's daughter." Juſt ſo, ℣ 14. the ſenſe of the word *aunt* is expreſsly determined, "Thou ſhalt "not uncover the nakedneſs of thy father's brother; thou "ſhalt not approach to his wife, ſhe is thine aunt." The preſbytery have thought, that, ſeeing this is the reaſon of the prohibition that ſhe is his aunt, this word muſt carry farther import than father's ſiſter; and what ſhould that be? It is this, as they declare, As ſhe is the aunt of her huſband's immediate nephew, her niece, ſo ſhe is an aunt to her grand-niece, and all in a direct line downward. And this is their authoritative ſenſe of the reaſon for a man's not approaching to his father's brother's wife. It ſhould not be thought, that they are imagining the Bible was at firſt written in our language; and yet, even in our language, the *aunt* ſimply and the *grand-aunt* are different deſignations, and different perſons; and the *aunt* will never make *grand-aunt*, unleſs we put *grand* to it: nor ſhould it be thought, that this preſbytery is caſting about to fetch in an old Popiſh notion into a Proteſtant church, That perſons ſhould not marry in ſuch a relation as has a common name given to it. But as this their interpretation of the reaſon of this prohibition is wholly beſide the plain mind of the law-giver, and founded upon their ſenſe of an Engliſh word: ſo it is moſt evident, that the reaſon the lawgiver there points out for a man's not approaching to his father's brother's wife, is, ſeeing that huſband and wife ſtands for the ſame thing throughout this law, as being one fleſh, ſhe is the ſame thing to him as his father's brother, whoſe nakedneſs her's is, and ſhe is ſo to him, his father's ſiſter or his aunt. This is very clear in the text, which ſays, a man uncovers the nakedneſs of his father's brother by approaching to his wife; and was it poſſible for the preſbytery to overlook this, and give another ſenſe, if they had not been

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in the greateſt haſte to condemn J. B.? Thus aunt here, as in other places, is ſtill father's ſiſter, Exod. vi. 20. Numb. xxvi. 29. And if it ſignify couſin-german in theſe places, according to the mind of ſome interpreters, then the reaſon hereby fetched into the Levitical law upon inceſt makes couſin-germans unfit for marriage.

3. Neither does this law make the leaſt uſe of the notion of parentage, but in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. We have heard how it expreſſes the relation betwixt the grandfather and grandchild, and gives ſuch a reaſon for the prohibition, even in that law, as leaves not room for a general notion of parentage to come into this law; and as it meddles not with any general notion of parentage, ſo it makes no manner of uſe of the notion of ſuperiority and inferiority. It forbids equals (brother and ſiſter) to marry, but not on the account of their equality. It forbids ſuperiors and inferiors (the begetting parent and child, and child's child, and the uncle and niece) to marry: but not on the account of the ſuperiority or inferiority. The wiſe lawgiver goes more ſtrictly to work than to inſiſt in this caſe upon a general notion, that, if it were followed, would take in innumerable marriages that have no manner of concern with the ſubject of this law, or the reaſon of it, ſuch as all marriages betwixt tutors and pupils, magiſtrates and ſubjects, maſters and ſervants, elder and younger, miniſters and people, learned and unlearned. And if this general notion of parentage and ſuperiority ſhould be reſtricted to the affair of kindred and affinity, it would ſtill be unlawful for one couſin german, or his wife, to marry the other couſin-german's child or grandchild, upon the direct line ſtill downward, as the preſbytery ſpeaks. But if the general notion of parentage and ſuperiority muſt yet be further reſtrained unto great nearneſs of kin, then that general notion is dwindled away into a particular, and the ſtreſs leans on great nearneſs of kin, the Lord's own reaſon: but who ſhall determine that nearneſs of kin to us, if it be not he who can ſay, "I am the Lord?" He does indeed determine it: but not a ſyllable ſpeaks he in this law of a general notion of parentage, or of ſuperiority or inferiority. The civil law, as it ſtood when Antichriſt was growing to his height, forbids the grand-uncle to marry his grand-niece; for this reaſon, becauſe he is unto her in place of a parent. And theſe foreign divines, who, by their circumſtances in the countries and times wherein they lived, have been induced to explain the law of God by Juſtinian's law, have themſelves obſerved a difference between

tween that law and the law of God in this caſe, and have been obliged to ſtrain exceeding hard to reconcile the commentary with the text; but they might have ſaved their pains if they had conſidered, that Chriſtians made no bonds in thoſe days of carrying points wherein the divine authority claimed a concern, much farther than God's law carried them.

4. And as little does the law of God make any mention of a reaſon taken from the removal of the relation from a forbidden degree on the one ſide, but not on the other. It is the true relation of brother and ſiſter is a forbidden degree, and the law forbids the marriage of uncle and niece, where the relation is removed upon one ſide, but not on the other, and leaves it free to couſin-germans, where the relation is removed on both ſides: but does it inſinuate this reaſon, taken from the difference which we obſerve betwixt theſe two caſes? nothing like it; but declares another expreſsly, which will carry the thing no further than the Lord himſelf carries it, who ſtops on both hands where there is an equal diſtance of relation, that is, where there is an equal number of perſons intervening. And why ſhould God's own reaſon be neglected in this caſe, and another put in place of it, which he never once points to, and which carries the thing farther than it can go upon the reaſon he gives? And it is here to be obſerved, that, in the caſe of couſin-germans, the relation is removed only upon one ſide, from the forbidden degree of uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew, and ſtands on the other. Though there be no uſe made of the foreſaid things in the law of God upon inceſt, yet we muſt conſider how this law of his ſtands, and if any thing ſhall be found in it from which the unlawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage can be inferred, let it be declared unlawful.

The following obſervations upon this law may ſerve to clear this matter to unprejudiced minds.

1. The reaſon given in the introduction is preciſely this, Lev. xviii. 6. "None of you ſhall approach to any that is "near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedneſs; I am the "Lord." Here the Lord lays the nearneſs of kin for a foundation to all the following prohibitions, which are his explications upon this general, and are all built upon this foundation; and then he declares his ſovereign authority as the abſolute Lord and Lawgiver, and thereupon calls for obedience, and proceeds to determine by that his authority what is that nearneſs of kin. If he had reſted in the general, and left us to determine in that matter of the nearneſs

neſs of kin, we had been in the greateſt uncertainty, and our conſciences had been perplexed with numberleſs fancies and reaſonings of our own about it, as is evident from the various reaſons men have imagined to themſelves againſt marriage, in the degrees he forbids, which reaſons he never once points to, and from the Popiſh fancies about near kin; but becauſe he knew we would be ready either to ſtop too ſhort, or elſe proceed too far, in fixing the bounds where death ſhould lie on the one ſide, and life on the other, he takes the matter ſo in his own hand, as to make the men guilty of a very criminal uſurpation, who ſhall take upon them by their wiſdom to determine in this matter leſs or more, than he has thought fit to determine. "I am "the Lord" has a dreadful import here, not only to the diſobedient, but alſo to them that take away or add, and interpoſe their authority where his is not interpoſed in this caſe; and this falls heavy upon the church of Rome and the Pope, who pretending to act in his name, and ſeeking to advance the intereſt and authority of that church, took upon them to forbid far beyond what he forbids. But this land is mercifully delivered from that Antichriſtian authority in this point; and the law of the land renders unto God what is his own in this matter, by referring wholly to his law.

2. In the prohibitions that proceed upon this ground of the nearneſs of kin, the Lord puts the huſband and wife for the ſame thing, and ſpeaks of their nakedneſs as one and the ſame, they being "no more twain, but one fleſh. The na-"kedneſs of thy father's wife is thy father's nakedneſs, the "nakedneſs of thy brother's wife is thy brother's nakedneſs; "thy father's brother's wife is thy father's ſiſter, or thine "aunt, ſaith the Lord:" And ſo he that marries his wife's brother's daughter, doth the ſame thing in this caſe as if he married his own brother's daughter; and the like might be ſaid of his brother's grand-daughter, if the law had forbidden that far down, or in that degree; for we can make no further uſe of affinity here than the law does, nor can we carry it unto any degree of kin which is not there forbidden. And thus it is moſt true, that the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her huſband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own, as ſays the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter: but theſe foreign divines that follow the civil law in that notion, of them that are in the place of parents, and ſo go further

than the word of God in the caſe of conſanguinity, yet do not ſeem to carry the thing ſo far in affinity.

3. The Lord likewiſe expreſsly makes the nakedneſs even of the grandchild, to be unto the grandfather his own nakedneſs, in forbidding him to uncover it, ℣ 10. "The naked-"neſs of thy ſon's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, "their nakedneſs thou ſhalt not uncover; for their's is thine "own nakedneſs."

Thus, though there be not ſo many perſons between the grandfather and his grandchild, as between the uncle and the nice; yet the reaſon given for the prohibition upon this direct line carries further than upon the other lines, where the prohibitions go merely upon the nearneſs of kin.

It has been ſaid againſt the Papiſts, that marriage with the children of grandchildren is not forbidden expreſsly, for this reaſon, becauſe it is not a ſuppoſable caſe, (and truly it is far leſs ſuppoſable than a marriage with a brother's grandchild, which is not expreſsly forbidden, as a marriage with a man's own grandchild is), yet it is altogether needleſs and unreaſonable to ſeek any other reaſon for the thing, when there is a ſufficient reaſon evidently given in the law itſelf; which reaſon makes it plainly as unlawful for perſons to uncover the nakedneſs of the grandchildren of their grandchildren, whoſe nakedneſs is their own nakedneſs, as for a man to uncover the nakedneſs of the grandchildren of his wife, whoſe nakedneſs is his own: ſo marriage with the grandchildren of a perſon whoſe nakedneſs is declared in the law to be our own, is expreſsly made unlawful to us in this law: and as the Lord does not mention this reaſon in forbidding upon the direct line, till he came down to the grandchild, ſo in the ſame ſenſe wherein it can be ſaid, that a man's grandchild's nakedneſs is his own, in that ſame very ſenſe all that deſcend from him, and to whom blood is derived from him, their nakedneſs is his own. This the prohibition is perpetual upon the direct line: And thus far the law of nature, as known to them deſtitute of revelation, goes clearly along with the revealed law; and this that the Lord ſays of a man's own nakedneſs is a clear explication of the law of nature.

But now the nakedneſs of them lineally deſcended from a perſon, is declared by the Lord to be the perſon's own nakedneſs, and that only unto the perſon from whom they are ſo deſcended, and unto the purpoſe of debarring the uncovering of nakedneſs between them. And as the Lord has thus ſtated it, ſo we cannot carry it further; neither does it indeed

deed hold in other caſes: For, 1. It cannot be thus ſaid, that the perſons lineally deſcended from one brother, their nakedneſs is the other brother's own nakedneſs from whom they are not all deſcended, and of whoſe fleſh they are no remainder in any ſenſe but in the ſenſe of nearneſs of kin. And if the niece could not marry the uncle, becauſe her nakedneſs is her father's, who is his brother, and ſo ſhe is the ſame thing to him as his brother; then by the ſame reaſon ſhe could not marry her uncle's ſon, or grandſon, or any upon that direct line downwards, as the preſbytery ſpeaks, ſeeing their nakedneſs is ſtill her uncle's nakedneſs, and ſo they would be the ſame thing to her in this caſe with her uncle; they are indeed the ſame thing to him, but in no wiſe to her. 2. All that are lineally deſcended of two brothers, and of their father, are every one of them unto the brother of whom they are deſcended, and unto that common father, in ſuch a manner a remainder of their fleſh, as that their nakedneſs is their own nakedneſs; and if we ſhould thus make them to ſtand for the ſame thing, as thoſe of whom they are deſcended; and that with reſpect to one another, all marriages would be unlawful, becauſe thereby all deſcended of the two brothers would be ſiſters and brothers to all generations, as being ſtill the ſame, and that unto one another, with the firſt two brothers. And the abſurdity of this needs not be further pointed out.

4. Therefore in the other degrees upon which the Lord forbids the uncovering of nakedneſs, he proceeds upon the ground of nearneſs of kin; and, by his ſovereign authority, determines that nearneſs which would not be fully and clearly determined by nature's light.

And he firſt forbids the uncovering of nakedneſs betwixt a brother and a ſiſter, begotten by the ſame parent, ℣ 9. 11. 16. Here the generating parent comes between; and ſo the parties here forbidden to uncover nakedneſs, are at a greater diſtance of kin than they who are diſcharged to come together, becauſe of the fore-mentioned "own nakedneſs," ℣ 7. 8. 10. 15. 17. yet not at ſuch a diſtance but that the Lord declares them too near of kin to come together, there being but one between: and ſo it is unlawful for any perſon to uncover the nakedneſs of her who is neareſt to the perſon that is neareſt to him. He proceeds yet a degree farther, and forbids the uncovering of nakedneſs betwixt the brother or ſiſter of the begetting parent, and the child of that parent, ℣ 12. 13. 14. This prohibition goes expreſsly upon

the nearneſs of kin, and this is juſtly reckoned the loweſt of the degrees forbidden in this law; for here there come more between theſe forbidden to come together than in the caſe of brother and ſiſter, *viz.* *1ſt*, The begetting parent of the niece or nephew. *2dly*, The parent that begat that parent and his brother or ſiſter; ſo that there come two between; yet hereby they are not ſet at ſuch a diſtance but that the Lord ſtill declares them too near to come together; and ſo it is unlawful for any perſons to come together, where the diſtance of kin betwixt them is only by two intervening. Here the Lord ſtops, and further he goes not, who ſays, "I "am the Lord." And it is moſt obſervable, that though there be not the ſame diſtance between the brother and ſiſter, as there is betwixt the uncle and niece; yet he ſtops directly there, where the diſtance is preciſely equal, by an equal number of perſons intervening betwixt theſe whom he forbids not, and ſo allows to come together in marriage. Thus we find an equal number of perſons parents coming between two couſins-germans, and between the uncle and his grand-niece, and both are ſet at the ſame diſtance of kin, by the preciſe number of three perſons coming between each of them.

And who ſhall declare to us, that a marriage in this diſtance of kin is unlawful, when he whom it beſt becomes to ſay, "I am the Lord," and muſt be owned beſt to underſtand the matter, hath left it free?

We may fancy a thouſand things to ourſelves, and the moſt grave and learned divines, the moſt wiſe and able lawyers may give what judgment they think beſt; but while none of them can ſay, "I am the Lord," though we be bound to pay all due deference to their judgment; yet they muſt point out ſomething in this law of God, from which, as ſtated there, a clear inference may be made, ſhewing, That he hath indeed forbidden J. B.'s marriage before they can warrantably declare him a tranſgreſſor of this law of God; and if it be manifeſt, as it is, by what is above ſaid, that J. B.'s marriage is upon a degree farther than the fartheſt, and lower than the loweſt degree forbidden in the word of God, to which the law of this land does very juſtly refer as to the ſafeſt explication of the law of nature, and that in oppoſition to Antichriſt, who ſhews himſelf that he is God remarkably in this point, then it muſt be owned, that the law of God and of this land hath made his marriage lawful; and if his wife and he be lawfully married, can any man on earth put them aſunder?

Anſwers

Anſwers by the preſbytery of Dundee to the reaſons for the lawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage.

THE inconcluſiveneſs and falſehood of theſe reaſons will appear from a view of the nature of nearneſs of kin or nearneſs of blood, to which all the ſaid reaſonings refer. Nearneſs of kin or nearneſs of blood has its foundation in, and riſes from ſome family from which the perſons near of kin to one another are deſcended, or their nearneſs to the perſons from whom they are deſcended, *et vice verſa*; or from affinity by marriage, parents then being one fleſh, and ſo one blood, all their children, though they be ſaid to be the firſt degree deſcended from them, yet they are really parts of the parents, and of the ſame unmixed blood with them; likewiſe the perſon who marries any child of a family, is by that affinity juſt as he was a ſon of the family, and is reckoned by the divine law to have the ſame nearneſs of kin to the parents and to the other children of the family. And that this is the true and genuine nature of nearneſs of kin will appear from Lev. xviii. where the Lord expreſsly forbids ſuch and ſuch relations to marry, becauſe they are ſo near of kin to one another. And,

1*ſt*, A man is forbidden to marry, or to uncover the nakedneſs of any that has their whole blood of that family from which he is deſcended, or reckoned to have it by being married to one that has their whole blood of that family, *viz.* to uncover the nakedneſs of his mother, in the 7th verſe; of his father's wife, though not his mother, in the 8th; of his ſiſter, in the 9th; of his aunt, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th.

2*dly*, A man is forbidden to marry any deſcended of himſelf, or to uncover their nakedneſs, in ℣ 10.; and the ſame is implied in ℣ 7. where the grandchildren are only named in ℣ 10.; yet the reaſon added in the cloſe of the verſe, "For "theirs is thine own nakedneſs," ſhews, that the prohibition is extended to the remoteſt deſcendents; and this the framers of J. B.'s paper have thought fit to owh. Again, in like manner, a man is forbidden to "uncover the nakedneſs" of any deſcended of his wife in ℣ 17. becauſe he and ſhe being one fleſh and one blood, therefore her deſcendents are reckoned to him as his own; and *vice verſa*, all theſe deſcendents are forbidden to uncover the nakedneſs of any from whom they are deſcended, or of them who are married, or have been married to any from whom they are deſcended.

And,

And, *laſtly*, A man is forbidden to uncover the nakedneſs of a perſon who is or hath been married to one that has his whole blood of that family of which he is deſcended, in ℣ 8. 14. 15. 16.; in all which prohibitions it is to be obſerved, that either both the perſons have their whole blood of the ſame family, or that one of the perſons hath in him their whole blood of that family from whom the other is deſcended: or, laſtly, that one of the perſons is or has been married to one that had his whole blood of that family from which the other is deſcended, and ſo the perſon that has thus been one fleſh with one that had his whole blood, is reckoned by affinity to have the whole blood in himſelf. Now this laſt caſe is the caſe of J. B.; for he having been married to J. L. is reckoned to have the ſame relation to J. M. that J. L. had; and ſeeing J. L. had her whole blood of J. L. her father's family, by conſequence J. B. cannot lawfully marry J. M. who is deſcended of the family of J. L. of which J. L. was daughter, and therefore had her whole blood of that family. From what is ſaid, the vanity of the reaſoning in p. 483. about the terms *direct line*, *collateral lines*, and *oblique lines*, will appear; for all theſe terms are relative and uſeful in explaining this ſubject; and the preſbytery has not (as is alledged) confounded the direct line with the collateral or oblique, but have only ſhowed, that J. B. being as a ſon of J. L.'s family, and conſequently as deriving his whole blood from it, and J. M. being deſcended of the ſame family, he in the firſt degree, ſhe in the third, though both the lines, his and hers, are direct with reſpect to him from whom they are deſcended; yet they are oblique to one another. As to what is ſaid of this being but one degree forbidden on the collateral, and one on the oblique, and two on the direct: As to the direct, it is owned, in the cloſe of the paper, that though there be but two expreſsly named, yet the prohibition is perpetual; and therefore it is falſe that is ſaid here, that there are but two forbidden: as to the collateral lines, perſons in the ſecond degree may marry, *viz.* a grandſon by one ſon or daughter of a family, may marry a grand-daughter by another ſon or daughter; for, as they are grandchildren of that family, ſo each of them is grandchild to another family, and ſo deriving the one half of their blood from that family, and the other half from another, they may marry: but, on the oblique line, the perſon being a ſon or daughter, or married to a ſon or daughter of the family from which the other perſon is deſcended, that ſon or ſon-in-law deriving, or reckoned

ed as deriving his whole blood from that family, and the other deriving part of his blood from that ſame family, there is more blood betwixt them than betwixt couſin-germans, which are the neareſt in blood that can marry. From what is ſaid above, the meaſure which is alledged for knowing nearneſs in blood, *viz.* by the number of perſons intervening betwixt them, is falſe; for no number of perſons going between can make it lawful for perſons on the direct line to marry, nor yet on the oblique, as above.

Further, that of parentage in the direct line, *et loco parentis* in the oblique, is neceſſary and certain; and therefore what is alledged by divines of this being a ſecondary reaſon of the prohibition is founded in the very nature of the thing; and all that is ſaid by the framers of J. B.'s paper againſt its being a reaſon of the prohibition, in any ſenſe, is idle and frivolous. As to what is ſaid of the terms of this law in Lev. xviii. & xx. their being taken to be in a proper ſenſe, it is anſwered, The words here, as in all other parts of the ſcripture, have a determinate ſenſe and meaning, and are not to be extended further than is intended by the Holy Ghoſt; yet when it is evident, by the nature of the thing ſpoken of in this law, that they are not reſtricted, as the framers of this paper would have the latter clauſe of ℣ 14. the reaſon of taking it in a large ſenſe being as evident as the reaſon for taking the latter of ℣ 10. in a large ſenſe, which they themſelves do; and it is ſtrange to find men ſo bold to diminiſh the meaning of the divine law, or to take from it, when, at the ſame time, they are ſo liberal in their inſinuating judgments againſt thoſe that add to it; and the preſbytery are not ſingular in taking the laſt clauſe of ℣ 14. in a large ſenſe, but have the concurrence of all divines and lawyers agreeing with them in this opinion: and as to the conſequence which is drawn from it, that it would make all marriages unlawful, it is altogether groundleſs; for this ſenſe reſtricts to uncle and aunt, granduncle, great-granduncle, *&c.*; and the reaſon is obvious, *viz.* their nearneſs of kin to their nieces or nephews, the uncle, granduncle, or great-granduncle and aunts in like manner deriving their whole blood from that family, from which their nieces or grand-nieces and nephews, *&c.* derive part of their blood.

Upon the whole, it is obvious, that man and wife being taken for one and the ſame thing through the whole of this law about inceſt, as is done, and that juſtly, in J. B.'s paper, that the meaſure by which all the forbidden degrees are to be tried or judged is this one, namely, That a perſon who has

has in him the unmixed blood of a family, or derives his whole blood from a family, is diſcharged to marry or approach to any who derive any part of their blood from that family, and by this nearneſs of kin is eaſily known; but how the framers of this paper have ſlighted, yea oppoſed this juſt rule, and have ſubſtituted another very unjuſt and fallacious one in the room of it, is not eaſy to imagine; yea, they have ſo unwarrantably, yet boldly, aſſerted that nearneſs of kin is only to be known from the number of perſons intervening betwixt the relations in the forbidden degrees, yea to aſſert, that this is the reaſon given by the Lord, where there is not the leaſt ground of it, or foundation for it, in the divine law.

And to conclude, whatever be advanced in J. B.'s paper, to prove the lawfulneſs of a woman her marrying her grand-uncle; yet we are ſtill of the mind that it is neither agreeable to the law of God nor of nature, that a woman ſhould marry one that ſtands in place of a parent to her by right of blood.

Remarks on the preſbytery's anſwers, by Mr Glas.

THE only thing that deſerves any conſideration in theſe anſwers, is the view they give us of nearneſs of kin, and the rule they lay down for trying or judging of all the forbidden degrees, which we have thus in their own words.

"The meaſure by which all the forbidden degrees are to "be tried or judged is this one, namely, That a perſon who "has in him the unmixed blood of a family, or derives his "whole blood from a family, is diſcharged to marry, or ap-"proach to any who derive any part of their blood from "that family; and by this nearneſs of kin is eaſily known."

This is the ſum and ſubſtance of what is now advanced by the framers of the anſwers, or by the preſbytery, for taking off the force of the reaſons, ſhewing the lawfulneſs of J. B.'s marriage: this runs through the whole of the anſwers, and by this the inconcluſiveneſs and falſehood of the reaſons for the lawfulneſs of the marriage appears to them. They complain that this juſt rule has been ſlighted, yea oppoſed by the framers of the reaſons, and that they have ſubſtituted another very unjuſt and fallacious one in the room of it; and they are exceedingly ſurpriſed with this conduct. But it is as uneaſy to imagine how this rule could be contemned or oppoſed by any till once it was caſt up to them. And if this rule had

had been firſt on the field, and had been ſo juſt as it is ſaid to be, and then ſet aſide by any perſon to ſet up another unjuſt and fallacious one in the place of it, that perſon had been exceedingly to blame: but this is not the caſe; yet if this rule now found out by the preſbytery, let it be never ſo new, be a juſt one contained in God's word, and ſhewing the unrighteouſneſs and falſehood of other rules ſet up by men, why ſhould it not take place, and others be rejected? And therefore it muſt be tried.

1. Though this rule be recommended for eaſineſs; yet, upon a little reflection, it appears to exceed in eaſineſs: for if the propoſitions wherein it is ſet forth be true, it is by this rule eaſily known, that all Adam's race are ſo near of kin, that there can be no lawful marriage among them; for every man of that race derives his whole blood from that family, and has in him unmixed that one blood, of which all nations on the face of the earth are made. And there is no one family from which any man derives his whole blood, without mixture with another family but that family of Adam; and when a man deſcended of Adam marries a woman of that race, he uncovers the nakedneſs of one that derives not a part only, but the whole of her blood from that family. It is hoped, that no man will be ſurpriſed, that the framer of the reaſons did not notice this eaſy rule, this meaſure of the nearneſs of kin thus ſtated in the divine law concerning inceſt.

2. If we apply this rule to J. L.'s family, the family for which it was framed, then it may be inquired, If J. L.'s ſon's children, in whom the preſbytery ſays the blood is mixed, be as near of kin to J. L.'s daughter as is her brother, who, they ſay, has it unmixed? If they be as near of kin to her, then it will be unlawful for them to marry with her children; becauſe they are in the very ſame nearneſs of kin to them as he that derives his whole blood from that family of which they are deſcended: and ſo by this rule it will be unlawful for couſin-germans to marry: but if they be ſet at a further diſtance from J. L.'s daughter than his ſon their father is, and that by the mixture of foreign blood, or by the generation, then are not their children again ſet at another degree of diſtance from J. L.'s daughter by another mixture of blood, or by another generation? And if ſo, then does not every mixture of blood or generation make a new and further degree of diſtance, betwixt a perſon that has the blood of a family unmixed, and them that derive a part of their blood from that family? How then can this be the one

meaſure, by which all the forbidden degrees are to be tried or judged, and nearneſs of kin known, whereby no mixture of blood ſets them that are deſcended of a family at any degree of diſtance from one that derives his whole blood of that family? Yet this muſt be the juſt rule for trying the degrees, and knowing nearneſs of kin, in the room of which, to the great ſurpriſe of the preſbytery, ſome have ſubſtituted another unjuſt and fallacious one. Now that unjuſt and fallacious rule is the rule by which they that make uſe of it do find, that J. L. J. L.'s daughter, is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother than ſhe or any that could deſcend from her is from her father; and that J. L. is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother's children, than ſhe is from her brother; and further, that J. L. is at a greater diſtance of kin from her brother's grandchildren than ſhe is from his children; yea, and that J. L. is at the ſame very diſtance of kin from her brother's grandchildren, as her children, if ſhe had any, would be from brother's children: and, ſeeing ſhe communicates as little blood to her brother's grandchildren as her children do, there is neither more nor leſs blood, neither a greater nor leſſer degree of nearneſs of kin betwixt her and her brother's grandchildren, than there would be betwixt her children and her brother's children. And as the divine law ſays nothing from which any inference can be drawn, that God hath forbidden marriage upon one of theſe parallel degrees; ſo that law ſays as little to give any foundation for an inference, whereby marriage may be made unlawful upon the other. This rule, whatever the preſbytery think of it, was not brought to the divine law, but found in it, and no where elſe; and it applies to neither more nor leſs than what is plain and evident in that law; neither has any feaſible conſequence yet been drawn from that law to ſhew the leaſt miſtake in it. But the great evil of what is ſaid in the reaſons upon the nearneſs of kin, as ſtated in the divine law, is, that it makes J. B.'s marriage lawful, contrary to the will of the preſbytery, and the judgment of lawyers, to whom the preſbytery, while they profeſs themſelves to be teachers of, and at whoſe mouth we ſhould learn the law of God, do now ſend us to learn that law.

3. This rule laid down by the preſbytery is ſo far from being a juſt meaſure for trying the forbidden degrees, and from bringing us eaſily to the knowledge of nearneſs of kin as they pretend, that it perplexes and confounds the forbidden degrees, and utterly darkens the affair of nearneſs of

of kin, as it is ſtated in God's word: for by this rule of theirs, if the marriage of a brother and ſiſter, where the blood is not mixed upon any ſide, be not lawful, it is made more hainous than the marriage of grandfather with his grandchild, or any of his poſterity, where the blood of the family is unmixed only upon one ſide; and yet the Lord declares, That their nakedneſs is his own, which he does not declare as to the brother and his ſiſter, betwixt whom no ſuch thing takes place. And further, by this one rule of trying the degrees, and knowing the nearneſs of kin, it is made the ſame thing for a granduncle to marry his brother's or ſiſter's grandchildren as for a grandfather to marry his own grandchildren, or their poſterity, and yet the law of God makes an expreſs diſtinction, Lev. xviii. 10. 12. 13. 14. But by this rule there is no manner of diſtinction; for in both caſes, a perſon that hath in him the unmixed blood of a family, does neither more or leſs but marry another that derives part of the blood from that family; and ſo the uncle and niece are nearer of kin than the brother and ſiſter, becauſe they are as near of kin as the grandfather and grandchild, or any that deſcend from him, which the Lord makes a greater nearneſs than that of brother and ſiſter; and yet the uncle and niece are made near of kin in the word of God, only by virtue of the nearneſs of brother and ſiſter, which is preſuppoſed to it, ℣ 12. 13. 14. Is not this therefore a ſtrange confuſion of the degrees? And this is the preſbytery's moſt juſt and eaſy rule. They alſo ſeem to confound affinity and conſanguinity in ſuch a manner, as to make J. B. who is J. M.'s granduncle by affinity, to be in the place of a parent to her by right of blood; and this is evidently beyond all law and common ſenſe. And thus men that would be wiſe above what is written, are left to become vain in their imaginations.

The queſtion is groſsly miſtated, when it is put upon this footing, whether the inſtances expreſsly mentioned in the 18th chapter of Leviticus do ſo exhauſt the general prohibition, ℣ 6. that it may be lawful for any perſons to marry together that are not expreſsly mentioned in the Levitical law.

J. B. never made a queſtion of this; but it is conſtantly affirmed on his part, that the degrees of conſanguinity and affinity, clearly pointed out in theſe inſtances, and in the reaſons of the prohibitions, do ſo exhauſt the general precept, ℣ 6. that marriage cannot be unlawful upon degrees not pointed out in the following verſes; and that it is an uſur-

pation upon the divine authority, to prohibit upon any degree upon which he has not prohibited.

To this agrees the Proteſtant definition of inceſt, and the decree of the council of Trent is pointed againſt this as the doctrine of Proteſtants; and this is according to the definition of inceſt in the law of Scotland, James VI. parl. 1. act 19. "Therefore our Sovereign Lord, with advice and conſent "of my Lord Regent, and the three eſtates of this preſent "parliament, ſtatutes and ordains, That whatſomever perſon "or perſons, that commits the ſaid abominable crime of in-"ceſt, that is to ſay, whatſomever perſon or perſons they "be, that abuſes their bodies with ſik perſons in degree as "God in his word has expreſsly forbidden, in any time co-"ming, as contained in the xviiith chapter of Leviticus, "ſhall be puniſhed to the death."

And, act 15. "*Item*, Our Sovereign Lord, with advice "and conſent of my Lord Regent, and three eſtates of this "preſent parliament, has ſtatute and ordained, That the "halie band of marriage, made be all eſtates and ſorts of "men and women, to be als lawful and als free as the law "of God has permitted the ſamen to be done without ex-"ception of perſon or perſons; and has declared and de-"clares, That ſecunds in degrees of conſanguinity and affi-"nity, and all degrees outwith the ſamen, contained in the "word of the eternal God, and that are not repugnant to "the ſaid word of God, might and may lawfully marry at "all times, ſen the 8th day of March, *&c.* and ratifies and "approves all the ſaid marriages done, ſen the ſaid day, *&c.*"

And this was the thing ſtated in the ancient diſcipline of the evangelical churches in the valleys of Piemont, ſeveral hundreds of years before Luther. "Articles of marriage ought to "be performed according to the rules preſcribed by God, "and not within thoſe degrees which he hath forbidden; "and there need no ſcruple of conſcience be made con-"cerning what the Pope has forbidden, although we give "him no money for a diſpenſation; for that which God "hath not forbidden, may very well be done without his "permiſſion." *Morland's hiſtory, book* 1. *chap.* 5. *p.* 87. It is true, that Luther at firſt reſtricted inceſt to the inſtances expreſsly mentioned in the Levitical law, but afterward he went upon the degrees upon which theſe inſtances are given, as do the Proteſtant divines againſt the Papiſts. Brochmand, a Lutheran divine, thus ſtates the Proteſtant argument againſt the Papiſts, *Princeps et palmarium argumentum eſt hoc; allatum*

tum a Luth. de Capt. Babyl. viz. Rectius noviſſe Deum quæ perſonæ ad conjugium aptæ ſint, et quouſque ſe extendant cognationis gradus, quam ullus homo. Deus vero non prohibuit conjugia niſi uſque ad ſecundum gradum in linea inæquali, Leviticus 18. *et* 20. *Quocirca conjugia in reliquis gradibus a Deo non prohibitis inita, non poſſunt nec debent cenſeri conjugia inceſta. Brochmand de conjugia, quæſtio* 53.

They that have given their judgment in this caſe againſt J. B. have laboured under another remarkable miſtake in confounding the unequal or oblique line, as it is commonly called, with the direct line, and in overlooking this, *viz.* that the line is as direct from the common parent to his poſterity, by one of his children as by the other.

The Levitical law, though it ſpeaks nothing of theſe lines, makes a very clear diſtinction betwixt what we call the direct line, and the unequal or oblique, and that clearly founded in the nature of the thing. The Lord forbids the grandfather to marry the grand-daughter, or the grandſon to marry the grandmother, becauſe of their own nakedneſs, or becauſe there is a communication and derivation of blood betwixt them, and one of them is a part of the other's fleſh, and ſo makes it unlawful for all them to marry together, among whom this takes place, or where this may be ſaid, as where the Lord ſays it, "Theirs is thine own nakedneſs;" and this is perhaps inſinuated in the general prohibition, ℣ 6. if we look to the import of the original word: but this does not take place in the caſe of ſiſter and brother, betwixt whom there is no ſuch communication or derivation of blood, nor is there any ſuch communication of blood from the ſiſter to them that are deſcended of her brother; and therefore there can be no way of reckoning the nearneſs of kin in that caſe, but by the generations or degrees, while all that are on the direct line are unto one another as in the ſame degree, and ſo near of kin, that the nakedneſs of any one of them is the other's own nakedneſs, which is the higheſt degree of nearneſs of kin. This plain diſtinction is much overlooked, and a looſe way of arguing is gone upon, making an inference from the mother to the grandmother, as from the aunt to the grandaunt; though it be moſt evident the nature of the relation in the caſes of grandmother and grandaunt is vaſtly different, and the reaſon of the prohibition in God's law as to the grandmother, *viz.* "their own "nakedneſs," will never apply either to the aunt or grandaunt. Though the relation be the ſame, as to the matter of inceſt,

inceſt, in the caſe of the grandchild or greatgrandchild, yet it will never follow from this, that the relation is the ſame in the caſe of niece and grandniece: and though the grandfather, and the aſcendants on the direct line, be conſidered as one with the deſcendants on that line; yet this is only with reſpect to one another, and not with reſpect to any of them on another line, whoſe nakedneſs is not their own, otherwiſe it were moſt eaſy to demonſtrate every marriage inceſtuous: and therefore this reaſon for prohibiting a man to marry his aunt, "She is thy father's near kinſwoman," will never apply to the grandaunt, the grandfather's near kinſwoman, as has been with ſome confidence aſſerted, under the influence of the foreſaid miſtake.

The reaſonings upon the 14th verſe of the 18th chapter of Leviticus againſt J. B. look liker the forming of the word of God according to mens judgments, than the forming of their judgment, according to that word. The reaſon given in that 14th verſe, with reſpect to the uncle's wife, "ſhe is "thine aunt," does indeed ſhew, that the Lord carries the prohibition as far in affinity as he does in conſanguinity, but cannot extend to the grandaunt, whether we conſider the ſenſe and ſcope of the text, or the nature of the relation.

The text declares, as it is unlawful for a man to uncover the nakedneſs of his father's ſiſter, his father's near kinſwoman, or the nakedneſs of his mother's ſiſter, his mother's near kinſwoman; ſo it is unlawful for a man to uncover the nakedneſs of his father's or mother's brother, who is in the ſame nearneſs of kin with the father or mother's ſiſter; and then ſhews how a man in this caſe uncovers the nakedneſs of his father's brother, which is by approaching unto his wife, whoſe nakedneſs is thus declared to be her huſband's nakedneſs; and ſo ſays the Lord, "Thy father's brother's wife is thine aunt, "thy father's ſiſter." Thus it is plain, that as in the other caſes of this law, the Lord carries the affinity along with the conſanguinity, ſo he does in this caſe. And this is the only thing we have in the 14th verſe beyond what is contained in the 12th and 13th; ſo that if an inference cannot be drawn from the father's ſiſter to the grandfather's ſiſter, ℣ 12.; neither can an inference be from the father's brother's wife unto the grandfather's brother's wife: but from the father's ſiſter his near kinſwoman, unto the grandfather's ſiſter his near kinſwoman, there is not an inference, becauſe the grandnephew is at a farther diſtance of kin from the grandaunt than the nephew is from the aunt; and ſo the relation is not the

the ſame: for though the father's poſterity be not ſet at a diſtance from him in this caſe by generations, ſeeing their nakedneſs is ſtill his own, and thus they ſtand in the greateſt nearneſs of kin to him, yet every generation ſets them at a farther diſtance from his ſiſter, whoſe nakedneſs theirs is not, otherwiſe the aunt's daughter, and daughter's daughter, *&c.* would be as near of kin to the nephew, and at no greater diſtance from him than is his aunt, whoſe nakedneſs theirs is. And it is certain, that they who deſcend from a common parent by the ſiſter his daughter, are in a direct line from him and his daughter, as well as they that deſcend from him by the brother his ſon, are in a direct line from him, and from that ſon, and to thouſands of generations, they ſtand every one of them with the common parent, and the brother or ſiſter of whom they are deſcended, upon the direct line; ſo that none of them can be ſet at ſuch a diſtance from the common parent, or from theſe by whom they are deſcended from him but that ſtill their nakedneſs is their own: but theſe that deſcend from the common parent upon the one line, are ſet at a diſtance from them that deſcend from him upon the other line, and that by every generation; for even in the firſt the brother is at a greater diſtance from the ſiſter than he is from his father. And now let it be determined by them that can tell whether two and three make five, let it be determined whether they that deſcend from a common parent upon one line be ſet at a greater diſtance of relation from them that deſcend from him upon another line, by two generations upon one line, or by one upon each line; and then the great queſtion will be determined, whether the uncle and grandniece be nearer of kin to one another than are couſin-germans. Thus, neither by the aforeſaid text, nor by the nature of the relation as ſtated in the law of God, can any inference be drawn againſt the lawfulneſs of marrying the grandaunt, from the unlawfulneſs of marrying the aunt: and more muſt be ſaid upon the law of God for making out this inference than lawyers or divines have yet produced, before they can ſatisfy any impartial judge of the juſtneſs of it. It is owned, that the general ſtatute upon the ſubject of inceſt is contained in ℣ 6. "None of you ſhall approach to any that is near of kin to "him." And if this nearneſs of kin be not ſtated to us in the following verſes by the Lord himſelf, what is the deſign of theſe following verſes? And, if we be not to ſtand on the utmoſt uncertainty, muſt we not reſt in the Popiſh law, where only we find a pretence of infallibility? But if we be

be to take this nearneſs of kin as the Lord himſelf has ſtated it, then let any lawyer or divine point out ſomething in the law of God whereby it may be ſeen, that he hath ſtated this nearneſs of kin ſo as to take in the grandaunt with the aunt, and it will give ſatisfaction.

But the ſtrength of the ſynod's cauſe againſt J. B. lies in the judgment of lawyers and divines, which is very confidently affirmed to be againſt the lawfulneſs of his marriage; and though this were univerſally true, as it is not, yet this their judgment muſt have the leſs weight, when it is conſidered, that it took its riſe, not from the law of God, but from the law of the empire, as it ſtood in the ſixth century, where they find thoſe who are accounted to be in the place of parents forbidden to marry with them unto whom they are in the place of parents; and by this rule it is made unlawful for the uncle to marry the grandniece; but there is not the leaſt appearance of this fancy in the law of God, or in the law of Scotland. And if they had not had any other rule of judgment in this caſe, but the law of God, which is the ſame thing with the Scottiſh law in this matter, it is much to be queſtioned, if this caſe would have been judged inceſtuous by any lawyer or divine. And J. B. cannot but think it hard, that Juſtinian's law, and the judgment of lawyers and divines influenced thereby, ſhould now bind the men of this nation over to the higheſt cenſures of the church, and to death, when the law of God and of Scotland hath left them free. Lawyers have been deſired to give ſome inſtances of ſtatutes or deciſions in Scotland, touching J. B.'s caſe; and inſtances have been given of foreign laws or deciſions in countries where the puniſhment in this caſe is arbitrary; but there is no Scottiſh law nor deciſion yet produced that hits this caſe. And when it has been declared, that all inceſt whatſoever is capital by ſpecial ſtatute in our law, it ſhould have alſo been told, that all the inceſt whatſoever in our law is "the abuſing of "the body with ſik perſons in degree as God in his law has "expreſsly forbidden," Lev. xviii. As to the inſtance of a man tried and condemned at Perth by the court of juſticiary, for having carnal dealing with his wife's niece, it no wiſe touches this caſe, and it was exactly according to the law of God and of Scotland; for that man was guilty of abuſing his body with ſuch a perſon in degree as God in his word hath expreſsly forbidden, and ſo was clearly guilty of inceſt by the law of Scotland; but having carnal dealing with the wife's grandniece is not inceſt by that law, becauſe ſhe is not

not ſik a perſon in degree as God in his word hath expreſſly forbidden; and a deciſion making this to be inceſt by the law of Scotland, will be a new deciſion in Scotland. The caſe is very different where the puniſhment is arbitrary, and where it is capital; and lawyers will be leſs excuſeable in going beyond the law of God and of their country in the one caſe than in the other. But it is altogether unaccountable to take the help of the laws of other countries, where the puniſhment is arbitrary, to bring a perſon to death, where the law of God and of his country would ſuffer him to live.

Much ſtreſs is laid in the unanimity of lawyers and divines in their verdict upon this point. And when that is narrowly inquired into, the ground of boaſting upon this head will evaniſh. For are there not as eminent lawyers as have written, that have not carried inceſt further than the niece? And it is well known what Grotius ſays even as to the niece. And for the Civil law commentators that carry the prohibition down to the grandniece in conſanguinity, how many are there of them that carry it that length in affinity? Yea, have not ſome lawyers queſtioned the carrying down of the affinity to the very niece; ſo that take it either way, J. B.'s caſe is far from being unanimouſly judged inceſtuous by lawyers. And further, there is ſuch a queſtion among them, If laws forbidding marriages beyond God's prohibition can annul a marriage, when made, unleſs that certification be contained in the law?

As for the judgment of divines, it labours under the ſame defect in point of unanimity with that of the lawyers. In the writings of ſeveral foreign divines, we do not find the prohibition carried beyond the niece; and all they that, following the Civil laws, and the laws of their countries, have carried it down to the grandniece, have not ventured to carry it beyond the niece in affinity. As for Britiſh divines, perhaps there will not be found many among them, who, in their writings, have carried the prohibition beyond the niece.

[This cauſe was not decided by the aſſembly, but was annually called and poſtponed till the death of the defendant put an end to it.]

The end of the FIRST VOLUME.

E R R A T A.

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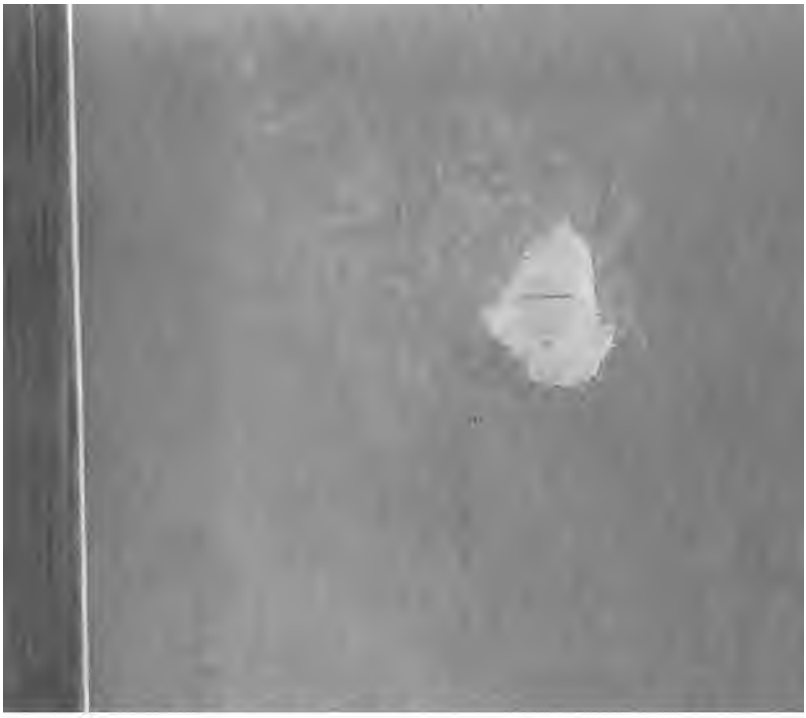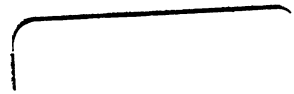
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